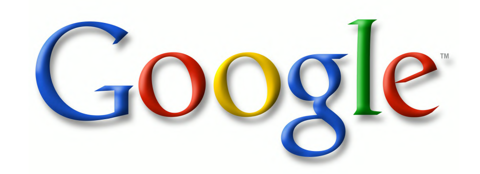




THE JOURNAL

OF

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.



MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF, 1876.

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MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

TRANSLATED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

MATHILDE BLIND.

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LA BELLE SAUVAGE

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MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

CHAPTER I.

PARIS, 1878.

Wednesday, September 4th.—Kant declares that things exist only by our imagination. That is going too far; but I admit his doctrine in so far as feeling is concerned. As a matter of fact, feelings are produced by the impression made on one, either by objects or living beings; and since he says that different objects are what they are, only in our mind—in a word, have no objective value or reality except in our mind . . . but a person who is in a hurry to get to bed and who has to calculate by what hour she must begin her drawing so as to have it finished by Saturday, cannot hope to reason out all that.

In ordinary language, imagination is other than what I mean by it; people say imagination when they mean folly, or nonsense; were it not for that. . . . Can love exist otherwise than in the imagination? And it is the same with every other sentiment. You see, all this edifice of philosophy is admirable, but a mere woman like myself can show it to be false.

You say that things possess reality only in our minds? Well, I tell you that the object strikes your sight, and the sound your hearing, and that these—let us say things

—determine everything. If it were otherwise, things would not need to exist, we should *invent* everything. If nothing exists in this world, where does anything exist? For to be able to affirm that nothing exists, you must know of the real existence of something, no matter where it be, if it were only to account for the difference between what is *objective* and what is *imaginary*.

Of course . . . . the inhabitants of another planet may have a different way of looking at things from ours, and in this case it is quite true. But we are on the earth, let us remain there, and study what is above or below us, and that is quite enough.

I become enthusiastic about these learned, patiently worked-out, extraordinary, amazing follies; these learned and logical arguments and deductions. . . . There is only one thing that makes me unhappy; it is that I feel that it is all false, and that I have neither the time nor the will to find out why it is so.

I should like to talk it all over with some one—I am very lonely. But I assure you that I do not wish to force my opinions on others. I tell my ideas naïvely, and I would readily yield to any good reasons that were offered to me. I ought, and I should like, without making myself ridiculous by excessive pretensions, to hear learned men speak; I should like, you cannot tell how much, to obtain admittance into the world of letters and science, to see, to listen, to learn. . . . But I do not know whom nor how to ask for what I want, and there I remain, stupefied, wonderstruck, not knowing into what study to throw myself, and catching glimpses on every side of treasures of interesting knowledge—history, languages, science, the whole earth, in fine . . . . I wish that I could take in the whole world at a glance, and learn and know everything.

Friday, September 13th.—I am not in my right place in

the world. I waste in idle talk energy enough for the making of a man. I make set speeches to express my feelings about domestic and absolutely trifling annoyances. I am nothing, and the capabilities which might have developed into real qualities are nearly always wasted or misapplied.

There are big statues which are admirable on a pedestal in the middle of a large square, but place one of them in your room, and you will see how stupid it is, and how much in the way! You will knock your head and your elbows against it ten times a day, and at last you will curse and find unbearable that which, if it were in its right place, every one would admire.

If you find that the "statue" is too flattering an image for me, well, I am content to let it be . . . whatever you like.

Saturday, September 21*st.*—I have received both praise, compliments, and encouragements. Breslau, who has returned from the seaside, has brought back some studies of women and heads of fishermen.

The colouring is charming, and poor A——, who consoled herself formerly by saying that Breslau was no colourist, looked quite crestfallen. Breslau will be a great artist, a truly great artist, and if you but knew how severely I judge, and how I despise the pretensions of these females, and their adoration for R——, because, so it seems, he is handsome, you would understand that I do not fall into ecstasies about nothing; besides, when you read these lines the prediction will be fulfilled.

I must force myself to draw from memory, otherwise I shall never be able to do compositions. Breslau is always making rough drawings, sketches, doing all kinds of things. She had already been doing them for two years before she came to the studio, and she has now been there two years and more. She came about June, 1876, just when I was wasting my time in Russia. . . . Oh, misery!!

Monday, September 23rd.—Julian came to tell me that M. Robert Fleury is very pleased with me; and going back over everything I have done, he thinks that considering the short time I have been working I have done wonderfully well; that he has, in fact, great hopes of me, and thinks that I shall certainly bring him great credit.

It is stupid to write every day, when there's nothing to say. I bought a wolf-skin in the Russian section for a rug. Pincio the Second is terribly afraid of it.

Shall I really become a painter? The fact is that I only leave the studio to read the illustrated Roman Histories, with notes, maps, texts, and translations.

That is also stupid; nobody is interested in these things, and my conversation would be more brilliant if I read something more modern. Who cares for early institutions, or for the number of citizens who lived under the reign of Tullus Hostilius, for the sacred rites of Numa Pompilius, or the struggles between the tribunes and the consuls?

Duruy's great History, which is appearing in numbers, is a treasure.

When I have finished Livy, I shall read Michelet's History of France, and then I shall read the Greek authors whom I only know by hearsay, and from quotations in other books; and after that . . . My books are packed up in boxes and we must take an apartment in which we are more likely to remain than this one, before I unpack them.

I have read Aristophanes, Plutarch, Herodotus, a little of Xenophon, and I think that is all. Epictetus too, but it really is not enough. And then there is Homer, whom I know very well, and Plato, whom I know just a little.

Friday, September 27th.—Very often, and in all circles, people discuss the mutual wrongs of men and women, exerting themselves to prove the one or the other to be the

more guilty. Must I then interfere to enlighten the poor denizens of this earth?

Man has to a certain extent the initiative in nearly everything, and so must be looked upon as the more guilty, without being on that account worse than the woman, who, since she is, so to speak, condemned to be passive, escapes a certain amount of responsibility, but is not, on that account, better than the man.

Saturday, September 28th.—Robert Fleury was again pleased with me and asked me if I had done any painting.

"No, Monsieur."

"Ah, Mademoiselle, that was not right; you know that it was agreed that you should. You will be really culpable if you do not work a great deal."

And if you knew how sparing he is in his praise, a "not bad" is a great deal to obtain from him, and I have had *"good," "well done," "very well done!"*

Monday, September 30th.—I have done my first regular painting. I was to do still-life studies, so I painted, as you already know, a blue vase and two oranges, and afterwards a man's foot, and that is all.

I dispensed with the drawing from the antique; I shall perhaps be able to do without the work from still-life.

I have written to Colignon that I should like to be a man. I know that I could be somebody, but with petticoats what do you expect one to do? Marriage is the only career for women; men have thirty-six chances, women only one, as with the bank of the gaming table, but, nevertheless, the bank is always sure to win; they say it is the same with women, but it is not so, for there is winning and winning. But how can one ever be too particular in the choice of a husband? I have never before felt so indignant at the present condition of women. I am not

mad enough to claim that stupid equality which is an utopian idea—besides, it is bad form—for there can be no equality between two creatures so different as man and woman. I do not demand anything, for woman already possesses all that she ought to have, but I grumble at being a woman because there is nothing of the woman about me but the envelope.



Thursday, October 3rd.—To-day we remained for nearly four hours at an international dramatic and musical matinée. They performed scenes from Aristophanes, in frightful costumes, and so abridged, so ill-arranged and altered that it was simply hideous.

What was splendid was a dramatic recitation, *Christopher Columbus*, given in Italian by Rossi: what a voice, what intonation, what expression, what truth to nature! It was finer than music. I think it would seem magnificent, even to one who did not understand Italian.

While I listened to him I almost worshipped him. Ah! how great the power that lies in speech, even when the words are learnt by heart, even if it is not real eloquence. That fine looking Mounet-Sully recited afterwards . . . but I will not speak of him. Rossi's recitations are high art; he has the soul of a great artist. I saw him as he was leaving, talking to two other men; he is common. He is an actor; but an artist of his stamp must have a certain grandeur of character even in everyday life. I saw by the look in his eyes that he could not be altogether an ordinary man, but the charm exists only when he is speaking . . . Ah! but then it is marvellous . . . To think the Nihilists scoff at all art!

What a terrible existence! If I were clever, I should know how to get out of this; but then there is only some one's word for it, and, moreover, that some one is myself. Where have I proved or shown my intellect?

Saturday, October 5th.—It was Robert Fleury's day to correct our drawings at the studio. Well, I had such a terrible fright; he cried, "Oh! oh! Ah! ah! Oh! oh!" in several different tones of voice, and then said—

"So you are going in for painting now?"

"Not altogether, Monsieur; I shall only paint once a month . . ."

"Never mind, you are right to begin; you may paint. There's someting good too in your work."

"I was afraid I did not know enough to begin painting."

"On the contrary; you are quite advanced enough Continue; this isn't bad at all—" &c., &c.

After this I had a long lesson, which proves that my case is *not hopeless*, as they say at the studio. I am not liked there, and whenever I have some poor little success, B—— gives me a furious look, quite laughable to see.

But Robert Fleury will not believe that I have never learnt painting.

He remained a long while, correcting, chatting, and smoking, just as if he were Carolus.

He gave several extra pieces of advice, and then asked me what place I had had at the last competition of last year. And when I told him that I was second . . .

"And this year," he said, "you must . . . H'm!"

It is so absurd; he has already told Julian that he thought I should get a medal.

At last, without any difficulty, I have the permission to paint from life, without having done still-life studies; I pass them over as I passed over the antique.

Monday, October 7th.—Stupid people will say that I want to be the successor of Balzac—it is not so; but do you know the secret of his great power? It is that he pours out on paper all that his mind conceives, quite naturally, without fear or affectation. Nearly all people of intelligence

have thought what he has known how to write down; but who could have expressed their thoughts as he does? The same faculty given to any other mind would certainly have produced a very different result.

No! Nearly all people have not had these thoughts, but in reading Balzac, his truth and fidelity to nature have so taken hold of them, that they fancy his thoughts already existed in their own minds.

But as for me, a hundred times, while speaking or thinking of some particular thing, I have been horribly tormented by ideas that I felt to be in my mind, and that I had not the power to unravel and extract from the frightful chaos of my brain. I have also another belief with regard to myself; I fancy that whenever I say anything clever, or make some remark full of penetration, people will not understand.

Perhaps, indeed, they may not understand it as it was meant.

Good night, good people!

Robert Fleury and Julian build great hopes on me; they take care of me as if I were a horse which had a chance of winning the Grand Prix. Julian does nothing but intimate by his gestures that the praise will spoil me; but I assured him that, on the contrary, it gave me great encouragement, which is the truth.

Wednesday, October 9th.—The successes obtained at the competition of the École des Beaux-Arts by Julian's pupils have given his studio a good standing.

There are more students than enough. Each one imagines he will get a Prix de Rome, or at least compete at the École.

The ladies' studio shares in this distinction, and Robert Fleury vies with Lefebvre and Boulanger. To everything, Julian says—"What would they say of it down-stairs?" or else, "I should like to show that to the gentlemen below."

I long indeed for the honour of having a drawing of mine shown down-stairs. You know they only send down the drawings to show off what we can do, or to make them furious, because they say that women are of no account. For some considerable time I have been thinking of the honour of having my work sent down.

Well! To-day Julian entered the room, and after looking at my study from the nude, he *spoke thus* :—

"Finish that well, and I will take it *down-stairs*."

Saturday, October 12th.—My study from the nude was thought very, very good.

"Ah! you are really talented, and if you work you can do what you like."

I am getting used to praise (I say so for form's sake), and the proof that R—— tells the truth is that they all envy me. And it is absurd that it should be so; but it gives me pain. There must be something in it for them to say such things to me each time, especially when the person who says them is a man as serious and conscientious as R——.

As for Julian, he adds that if I knew all that was said of me it would be enough to turn my head.

"You would be intoxicated with pride, Mademoiselle Marie," said the maid.

I always fear that those who will read these lines will think that people flatter me because I am rich. That makes no difference. I do not pay more than the others, and the others have influential friends, or are related to professors. Besides, when you read this diary there will no longer be any doubt as to my merits. Ah! I must at least obtain compensation in that way.

It is gratifying to see the respect paid to one for personal merit.

R—— begins to imitate Carolus. He comes and he

goes (he has received a grand medal at the Universal Exhibition); he stays to chat after he has corrected the drawings, lights a cigarette, throws himself into an arm-chair. All that I do not mind; I know that he adores me as a pupil, and so does Julian.

The other day the Swedish girl gave me some advice, and so Julian called me into his private room, and told me that I ought to follow my natural bent; that my painting, would be at first weak, but that it would be *my own*, "whereas if you listen to others, I will not answer for what may happen."

He is willing for me to try my hand at sculpture, and is going to ask Dubois to give me advice.

For the first time in Paris I enjoyed my drive. I was dressed, my hair done. I looked neat, I had taken my time, I had not hurried. And as Dina remained with mamma, I had the place of honour.

To ride with my back to the horses is torture to me instead of being a pleasure. Every Saturday I shall do the same. It is so stupid to go to the Bois, however you go. To-day I was myself again. I had some success, every one looked at me.

I was in mourning, and wore a felt hat with feathers; the whole effect being elegant, stylish, and simple.

Monday, October 14th.—"The whole place is crammed down-stairs," said Julian; "I will take down your study from the nude; give it to me."

I know that these are only trifles, but still it is pleasant.

Wednesday, October 16th.—It is silly, yet it pains me to see the envy of these women. It is so little-minded, so shabby, so mean. I have never known what it is to be envious of anybody. I merely regret not to be able to do as well.

I submit to superiority; I am sorry for it, but I submit; whilst these creatures . . . . nothing but conversations prepared beforehand, little smiles when they speak of a certain person with whom the professor is pleased, things said of another person, but meant for me, to prove that studio successes signify nothing.

Finally, they have come to the conclusion that the competitions are nothing but a farce, especially as Lefebvre has bad taste and only likes drawings stupidly copied from life, and Robert Fleury is no colourist. In short, the masters are incompetent, despite their celebrity; such is the dictum of the Spanish girl, Breslau, and Noggren. I am quite of their opinion when they say that the studio successes imply nothing at all, for there are two or three specimens here who will for ever remain deplorable mediocrities, and who yet pass for first-rate artists in the eyes of the other students.

I am disliked by the students, but the masters are pleased with me.

It is so amusing to hear these women say the very reverse of what they said ten months ago, when they felt sure of getting first medals. It is amusing because it is one of those comedies which are played all the world over, but it irritates my nerves. Is it, perhaps, because after all I have an honest nature?

These studio squabbles annoy and exasperate me in spite of all my reasoning. I am indeed impatient to leave them behind me.

Sunday, October 20th.—I ordered the carriage for nine o'clock, and, accompanied by my maid of honour, Mlle. Elsnitz, I went to see Saint Philippe, Saint Thomas d'Aquin, and Notre Dame. I ascended to the top, and I went to see the bells, just like an English girl. Well! There is a Paris I adore and that is old Paris, and I could

be happy there, but only by avoiding the boulevards, the Champs Elysées, all the new and fine quarters, which I abominate, and which irritate me. But over there in the Faubourg Saint Germain you feel quite differently.

We saw the École des Beaux-Arts. It is enough to make one cry.

Why cannot I go and study there? Where can any one get such thorough teaching as there? I went to see the Exhibition of the Prix de Rome. The second prize was won by one of Julian's pupils. Julian is much pleased. If ever I am rich I will found a School of Art for women.

Saturday, October 26th.—My painting is much better, and my study from the nude very good. M. T—— was the examiner for the competition. Breslau was first, I second.

In short I ought to be satisfied.

This morning, as Robert Fleury was speaking to me in the corner about the designs for my sculpture, I stood listening to him like a little child, with a look of innocence on my face, my cheeks changing colour, not knowing what to do with my hands. He could not help smiling while he spoke, and so did I, for I was thinking that I smelt of fresh violets, that my hair, naturally wavy, dry, and light was full of delicious light and shade, and that my hands, holding I don't remember what, had assumed amusing attitudes.

Breslau says that the way my hands touch things is a beauty in itself, although my hands are not classically beautiful.

But one must be an artist to discover this beauty. The *bourgeois* and people in society do not notice the way one takes hold of things, and always prefer plump, or even fat, hands to mine.

Between ten and eleven o'clock I had time to read five newspapers and two numbers of Duruy.

I fear that these school successes do me harm. I am almost ashamed of getting on so well, and that they say to me "much better" or "very good," makes me conscious of neither the difficulties conquered nor the progress made—but when they say it to Breslau, it seems to me that she is a great artist.

That should reassure me a little.

Sunday, Nov. 3rd.—Mamma, Dina, Mme. X——, and I, drove out together. They want to get me married, but in order that they should not make me the means of enriching some good gentleman, I declared plainly that I was perfectly willing to marry, but only on condition that the man was rich, in a good position, and handsome, or else some clever and distinguished man. As for his temper, were he the devil himself that is my look-out.

Madame G—— spoke so profanely of the arts that I shall go out of the room if she speaks of them again before me. She quotes the example of ladies who paint at home and have masters, and she says that I shall be able to do the same when I am married. In the tone of indifference of the woman of the world, of the *bourgeoise*, there is something horribly revolting, which shocks all the nobler artistic feelings.

You understand, I reason things out for myself sensibly and logically.

I shall try first to compass the marriage of my dreams. If I am not successful in that I shall marry, as every one else does, by the help of my fortune. And so I am quite easy in my mind about it. When you marry, you have to reflect that it is not like choosing a suite of rooms which you hire by the month, but like buying a house. You must have everything you require in it; you cannot make shift

with an insufficient number of rooms, as you would in a lodging. Moreover, an old Russian tradition says that "Buildings added on bring ill-luck."

Tuesday, November 5th.—One thing there is which I think truly beautiful, and worthy of the heroic age: that self-annihilation of a woman before the superiority of the man she loves, must be the most exquisite gratification of her self-esteem that can be felt by a woman of noble mind.

Saturday, November 9th.—A shameful defeat. No medal given at all, which will cause those fools of girls who are advanced, and who did not compete, to triumph. I am first all the same; I think I should have been, even against Breslau. There would have been a tie for the first place; but this inward conviction amounts to nothing. The fact remains; they did not compete, no medal was awarded. In my heart I don't care two straws. Breslau is the only one for whom I have any respect. And, after all, she has worked three years at Julian's, and two at Zürich; in all nearly five years, not reckoning, that is, time lost through illness. And I have worked altogether only eleven months. And if you take into consideration my previous attempts, it will make up another month. If you count the copies from engravings, and the six heads I painted at Rome, done at different times, all this spoiling of paper makes up one month's work (eight hours a day, *I declare on my honour*), six weeks *at most.* So that we arrive at a total of one year. And all this to announce to you with great pomp, that I draw from the undraped model as well as Breslau; the masters told me so.

Wednesday, November 13th.—Robert Fleury came this

evening. It would be idle to repeat all the words of encouragement which he said to me after a long lesson. If what these people say is true, you will know, by the time you read this, what to think of me.

But it gives one pleasure, notwithstanding, to see that one is being really taken seriously. I am absurd . . . . I have the most unbounded hopes for myself, and when other people tell me the same thing, I seem never to have suspected such possibilities, and am in ecstasies of joy. I am as full of surprise, and as radiant, as a monster who learns that he is loved by the most beautiful of women.

Robert Fleury is an excellent teacher; he leads you on step by step, so that you feel at each step the progress you have made.

To-night he treated me a little like a pupil who had learnt his scales, and who had been given a piece for the first time. He lifted the corner of the veil, and revealed to me wider horizons.

To-night marks an era in my work.

Saturday, November 16*th*.—And to-day Robert Fleury was very pleased with Breslau, and advised her to do something for the Salon; adding that she would get in, he himself would answer for it.

As for me, this week I had that old G—— next to me, the pest of the studio; a good creature, but without any sense, and trying to one's nerves.

My drawing is now as good as Breslau's; she still has the advantage of me in practice. Now I must give myself so many months to paint as well as she does, for if I can't do that there can be nothing extraordinary in me. During the seven or ten months which I allow myself she will not stop . . so that I shall be obliged to push on fast enough to catch up the past ten months in the seven or ten months in which we shall race together.

It seems to me very unlikely, and would be very extraordinary. Well, I must leave it to Providence.

Wednesday, November 20th.—This evening, after my bath, I suddenly became so pretty that I spent twenty minutes looking at myself. I am sure that if people could see me to-night, I should be a success. The colour of my complexion is absolutely dazzling and yet delicate and tender; my cheeks have but the faintest tinge of pink; nothing marked but the lines of the lips, the eyebrows, and the eyes.

Please don't think I am blind when I am looking plain. I see it myself I assure you; and this is the first time I have been looking pretty for a very long while. My painting swallows up everything.

The horrible thing of life is that all must fade, become parchment-like, and perish!

Thursday, November 21st.—Breslau has painted a cheek so absolutely true and lifelike that I, a woman and a rival artist, felt inclined to kiss that woman's cheek. . . .

This must often happen in every-day life; one must not approach too near for fear of soiling one's lips, and ruining the thing one admires.

Robert Fleury came to-night to the studio. My work is still getting on well.

Friday, November 22nd.—The prospect of Breslau's future frightens me. I am disheartened and sad.

She can compose, and in her work there is nothing feminine, commonplace, or mis-shapen. She will attract attention at the Salon, for besides the expression she will put into it, the subject she will choose will be no ordinary one. I am truly mad to envy her; I am but a child in art, while she is a grown-up woman.

My painting before everything. For the moment I am in low spirits; everything looks black to me.

Saturday, November 23rd.—Robert Fleury has spoken to me again concerning "a real artistic future, the future of a painter of true talent." I do not remember the expressions he used, but he spoke of the study from the whole figure I did in the evenings, and Breslau, who heard, looked at me with that air of kindly esteem which people assume when they do not want to seem jealous.

It was not with reference to this week's head that he spoke, for my painting is still so poor that there is not much to say about it, but with reference to my work as a whole. What puts me out slightly is that he ordered me not to be content with studies at the studio, but to do sketches, composition from imagination, &c.

Hitherto my work had been that of a machine; now I must put something of myself into it, and show some independence.

By the way in which he advised me to work, and by the way he encouraged me, I saw that I am in his good graces, like Breslau. You understand that I don't care a rap for the man, I *do* care for the master; for I tell you again that though he be not a painter whose work takes one by storm, our chief is perfect as a teacher.

With Breslau and myself he has a particular way of correcting the work.

To-night I have been again to see the *Amants de Vérone* with Nadine and Paul. We asked Filippino to come with us. Capoul and Heilbronn sang and acted most delightfully. The score seems to open like a flower as one listens to it for a second time. I must go again. The flower will seem to open still more, and give forth a delicious perfume. The work contains exquisite phrases, but one needs both patience and delicacy of ear to appreciate them. This music does

not force its beauty on you, you must seek out its charm, which, subtle and faint as it is, yet exists.

Sunday, November 24th.—We went to see the Museum of Antiquities with Nadine. What simplicity and what beauty!

Ah! there will never be a second Greece!

Monday, December 16th.—It is freezing and snowing. I can only find rest in work, and I pass the two remaining hours in reading or dozing.

Never, never before have I been so depressed, down-hearted, discouraged, and sceptical. I care for nothing in the world.

I am at work, but like a machine; I must make a good sketch, and get praised for it. This will give me back my interest in the artist's fame, and be a reason for living.

Saturday, December 21st.—Done nothing good to-day. My painting doesn't get on; I think I shall want more than six months to do as well as Breslau. She will be a remarkable woman, no doubt . . . . an odd mixture, I should say, if oddness were not so common nowadays.

My painting doesn't get on.

"Well, my girl, you think that Breslau painted better than you do after two months and a half; but she painted from still-life or plaster casts."

Six months ago Robert Fleury made the same remarks to her which he did to me this morning:—"Your work is too smooth; the tone is crude and cold. Try and get out of this. Make one or two copies."

She didn't die of it at the end of ten months of painting; shall I die of it at the end of ten weeks?

Friday, December 27th.—I have lost a week at the studio. For the last three days I have wanted to write

down some reflections which I can't quite recall; but irritated by the singing of the young lady on the second floor I began turning over the leaves of my stay in Italy, and then I was interrupted and lost the thread of my thoughts and that melancholy frame of mind which is not unpleasant.

I am surprised at the ease with which I made use of high-sounding words at that time to describe the simplest occurrences.

But as I aimed at great sentiments, I was vexed at not being able to describe strange, wonderful, and romantic sensations, and made myself the interpreter of my sentiments; painters will understand what I mean. That is all very well; but how could a girl who claims to be intelligent be so mistaken about the true value of men and events? I say this because I was just going to remark that my relatives ought to have told me, for example, that A—— was not to be taken seriously, nor a man about whom one should be in the least put out. In short, they talked most injudiciously about him to me, my mother being younger than myself; but still, in spite of it all, since I have such a high opinion of my intelligence, I ought to have been a better judge, and should have treated him like everybody else, instead of making so much of him in my journal and elsewhere.

But I was full of impatience to have romances to record, and fool that I was, it would perhaps have been more romantic without them. In short, I was young and inexperienced, in spite of my rhodomontades and boastings; I must confess it at last, at whatever cost.

Very well! methinks I hear the reader say, a strong-minded woman like you should not be obliged to retract her words.

Sunday, December 29th.—Thereupon I leaned my head

on the sofa, and fell sound asleep till eight o'clock this morning. How amusing it is to sleep like this out of your bed!

I have quite lost hold of art, and can't get my mind fixed on anything whatever. My books are packed up; I am forgetting my Latin and my classics, and feel quite stupid. The sight of a temple, of a column, of an Italian landscape, makes me loathe this Paris, so dry, worldly-wise, learned, and over-refined. The human beings are all ugly here. This paradise, for it is a paradise to highly-organised natures, is nothing to me. Yes, rest assured that I am cured of my errors. I am neither clever nor happy; I feel inclined to go to Italy, to travel, to see mountains, lakes, woods, and seas. But travel with my family and their parcels, and their daily little bickerings, recriminations, tribulations! No; a hundred times, no! To enjoy the delights of travel I must wait, but time passes. So much the worse! I could always marry an Italian prince whenever I wished to do so; therefore let us wait.

For you see by taking an Italian prince I could go on working, as the money would belong to me; but then I should have to give some to him. In the meanwhile I will stay here, and go on with my painting.

On Saturday my drawing, done in two days, was not considered bad. You will see that it is only with an Italian that I could live in my own way either in France, Italy, or where I liked best; what a delightful life! I should live partly in Paris, partly in Italy.

CHAPTER II.

PARIS, 1879.—THE SALON.

Thursday, January 2nd.—What I long for is the freedom of going about alone, of coming and going, of sitting on the seats in the Tuileries, and especially in the Luxembourg, of stopping and looking at the artistic shops, of entering the churches and museums, of walking about the old streets at night; that's what I long for; and that's the freedom without which one can't become a real artist. Do you imagine I can get much good from what I see, chaperoned as I am, and when, in order to go to the Louvre, I must wait for my carriage, my lady companion, or my family?

Curse it all, it is this that makes me gnash my teeth to think I am a woman!—I'll get myself a *bourgeois* dress and a wig, and make myself so ugly that I shall be as free as a man. It is this sort of liberty that I need, and without it I can never hope to do anything of note.

The mind is cramped by these stupid and depressing obstacles; even if I succeeded in making myself ugly by means of some disguise I should still be only half free, for a woman who rambles about alone commits an imprudence. And when it comes to Italy and Rome? The idea of going to see ruins in a landau!

"Marie, where are you going?"

"To the Coliseum."

"But you have already seen it! Let us go to the theatre or to the Promenade; we shall find plenty of people there."

And that is quite enough to make my wings droop.

This is one of the principal reasons why there are no female artists. O profound ignorance! O cruel routine! But what is the use of talking?

Even if we talked most reasonably we should be

subject to the old, well-worn scoffs with which the apostles of women are overwhelmed. After all, there may be some cause for laughter. Women will always remain women! But still . . . supposing they were brought up in the way men are trained, the inequality which I regret would disappear, and there would remain only that which is inherent in nature itself. Ah, well, no matter what I may say, we shall have to go on shrieking and making ourselves ridiculous (I will leave that to others) in order to gain this equality a hundred years hence. As for myself, I will try to set an example by showing Society a woman who shall have made her mark, in spite of all the disadvantages with which it hampered her.

Friday, January 10th.—Robert Fleury came to the studio in the evening.

We dine and breakfast at the Café Anglais, where the food is good; it is the best restaurant in the place.

The Bonapartist papers, and the *Pays* in particular, were so stupid about the elections that I feel a sort of shame for them, as I did yesterday for Massenet when his incantation was encored, for it lost its charm by repetition.

If I don't win fame quickly enough with my painting I will kill myself, that is all. I made up my mind to this several months ago. . . . In Russia once before I wanted to kill myself, but I was afraid of hell. I will kill myself when I am thirty years of age, for until thirty we are still young and can hope for some turn of luck—happiness, or success, or anything in short. There, now, that's settled; and if I were sensible, I should not worry myself, neither to-night, nor ever again.

I am speaking very seriously, and am quite pleased at having settled it so far.

Saturday, January 11th.—At the studio it is thought

that I go greatly into society; and this, together with my position, keeps me apart, and prevents me from asking them to do any of the little things for me that they are in the habit of doing for each other—to accompany me to some painter's, for instance, or to a studio.

I worked honestly all the week until ten o'clock on Saturday night, then I went home and began to cry. Until now I have always prayed to God, but as He never hears me at all, I almost begin to lose my faith.

Only those who have experienced this feeling can fully understand the horror of it. I do not wish to preach religion out of goodness, but God is a very convenient institution. When there is no one to have recourse to, when all other means fail, there still remains God. It commits us to nothing, disturbs nobody, while affording a supreme consolation. Whether He exists or no, we are *absolutely bound to believe in Him*, unless we are quite happy, and then we can do without Him. But in sorrow and misfortune—in fact, in discomforts of every kind—it were better to die than not to believe.

God is an invention which saves us from utter despair.

Only think then what a thing it is to call upon His name in one's last extremity, without believing in Him!

Monday, January 13*th* (New Year's Day in Russia).—Well, I am amusing myself with nonsense, as usual. . . . The whole of Sunday is spent at the theatre. A *Matinée* at the Gaiety, which is rather dull, and an evening performance of *Le Pré aux clercs*, at the Opéra-Comique. I have been spending the night washing myself, writing and reading, lying on the floor, and drinking tea.

It is a quarter-past five; so I will go early to the studio, and this evening I shall be sleepy; to-morrow morning I will rise early and all will go on capitally. Do not imagine that I admire myself for all these tricks, for I am disgusted

and horrified with myself. But never mind, I greeted the New Year in an original fashion—on the floor with my dogs . . . I have worked all day long.

Tuesday, January 14th.—I was unable to get up till half-past eleven after sitting up all night. The competition was judged this morning by the three masters—Lefebvre, Robert Fleury, and Boulanger. I only reached the studio at one o'clock, and then only to learn the result. The elder girls had been examined this time, and the first words that greeted my ears as I entered, were: "Well, Mlle. Marie, come along and receive your medal!"

And indeed there was my drawing fastened to the wall with a pin, and bearing the word: "Prize." I should have been less surprised had a mountain fallen on my head.

I must explain to you the importance and real meaning of these competitions. Like all other competitive examinations, they are useful, but the rewards are not always the proof of the tastes and natural ability of the individual. For it is unquestionable that Breslau, for instance, whose picture comes fifth in the list, is superior in every way to Bang, who comes first after the medal. Bang goes *piano e sano,* and her work is like good honest carpentering; but she always takes a high place, because women's work is in general rendered painful by its weakness and fancifulness, whenever it is not of a strictly elementary character.

The model was a lad of eighteen years, who, both in form and colour, strikingly resembled a cat's head that one would make with a saucepan, or a saucepan in the form of a cat's head. Breslau has painted some figures which would easily win the medal; but this time she has not succeeded. And further, it is not execution nor beauty which is most appreciated down below, for beauty has nothing to do with study, you may have it in you or not, execution being only the complement of other more

important qualities; but it's above all, *correctness*, boldness, and *perception* of truth. They don't consider the difficulties, and they are right; therefore a good drawing is preferred to an indifferent painting. What, after all, do we do here? We study; and these heads are judged solely from that point of view. Mine is a perfect swaggerer. These gentlemen despise us, and it is only when they come across a powerful, and even brutal, piece of work, that they are satisfied; this vice is very rare amongst women.

It is the work of a young man, they said of mine. It is powerful; it is true to nature.

"I told you that we had a stunner up there," said Robert Fleury to Lefebvre.

"You have won the medal, young lady," said Julian, "and it was awarded with honours; the gentlemen did not hesitate."

I ordered a bowl of punch, as is the custom down-stairs, and Julian was called. I received congratulations, for many present imagined that I had reached the height of my ambition, and that they should get rid of me.

Wick, who won the medal at the last examination but one, is this time the eighth; but I console her by repeating to her the words of Alexandre Dumas, who says so truly:—"A failure is not a proof that we have no talent, whereas one successful piece of work is a proof that we have." This definition is, after all, the one most exactly applicable to these matters.

A genius may do a bad thing, but a fool can't do a good one.

Thursday, January 16th.—With two or three exceptions the evening pupils do not come in the morning.

I have been much praised; that *was* a delightful moment, though, when . . . .

"Come and take your medal!"

The other night, at Madame de M——'s, I said in a sweet, low voice, when showing my medal—

"This represents a great deal of courage, Madame."

And, indeed, it represents the work of twelve months. Next to the terror I experienced after my meeting with the king at Naples, the most violent emotion of my life has been the reading of *L'Homme-Femme.* The admiration I felt for Dumas made me believe for a few minutes that I loved, with passion and frenzy, this man of fifty-five years, whom I had never seen. I understood Bettina and Goethe.

Friday, January 17th.—If I were only sixteen I should be the happiest woman on earth.

"Well!" said Robert Fleury, "you have got the prize."

"Yes, Monsieur."

"That's all right; and you may be sure that you have deserved it."

"Oh, Monsieur, I am happy to hear you say so."

"Yes; it is well gained, not only on account of the head you did for the competition, but you have deserved it for your work generally. You have made great progress, and I am glad that it has so happened, and that you have won the medal; you have thoroughly deserved it."

I was blushing, and felt confused as I listened, which rather took from my pleasure in hearing those words; but my aunt, who was present, trembled more than I did.

"Mademoiselle Breslau has produced a nice horror," he said to the Spanish girl as he moved away.

"It was so difficult, Monsieur."

"Oh! tut, tut. It is because she has taken it into her head not to work; she appears now and then, and if she does not receive endless compliments, she disappears and we see nothing of her for weeks. She has, nevertheless, done some studies which . . . ."

"That head was so difficult, Monsieur," rejoined the Spaniard, who would take the devil's part if necessary, in order to find fault with the competitions.

"But she doesn't work."

"But she does something at home . . . ."

"It would be much better for her to make a good prize drawing." The poor man was annoyed that this should take place before Lefebvre and Boulanger.

Saturday, January 19th.—I have again caused, maintained, and quieted a studio rebellion. After it was over I went and told everything to Julian, so that he might not have the facts put before him in a distorted form.

Greatness in the bud! Science and talent in the bud! I very much fear that all these buds will only make a harvest for some donkey! Oh! if only I could be a man! but no, it would be better to die.

Wednesday, January 20th.—All day I am thinking of a blue sea, of white sails, and a sky all brightness . . . .

On entering the studio I find P——. This old mushroom tells me that in a week's time he is going to Rome, and in the conversation he happens to mention Katarbinsky, and others . . . . and I feel myself transported with joy at this prospect of sunshine; of old marbles amongst the foliage; of ruins, statues, and churches. The Campagna! that "desert"; yes, but I adore that desert. And thank God there are many besides myself who love it.

That divine and artistic atmosphere; that light, which, when I think of it, makes me cry with rage at being here.

I know some painters there!

There are three classes of people: the first love all this, are artists, and do not find the Campagna an odious desert, cold in winter and unbearable in summer;

the second don't understand art and don't feel its beauty, but dare not own it, and try to look like the former. These latter do not displease me so very much, for they see their nakedness, and try to conceal it. The third section resembles the second, but has not this redeeming feature. This is the class that I loathe, because they disparage and chill you. They do not feel or understand anything themselves; they pronounce art to be nonsense; and, narrow, callous, and revolting, they wallow in the full sunshine of Italy.

Monday, February 3rd. — Yesterday I went to see *L'Assommoir*, and liked it very much. But beforehand, from about five o'clock until evening, I spent my time trying to make a sketch. One must practise .... The others downstairs do so every Sunday; they are given a subject, and are expected to make a rough sketch from imagination.

As for myself, I begin at the beginning: Adam and Eve, on a canvas No. 4. And now that I've begun, I shall do one every week. If I listened to myself, I should never have done talking about my talents. For a first attempt my sketch is very good ....

I will show it to Julian with another that I am going to do.

Tuesday, February 4th.—This evening the model did not come. I sat, and while I was on the platform Julian arrived, and we talked politics. I enjoy talking to that slyboots.

I make fun of everything and everybody at the studio. I recite, jeer, and amuse them; I sketch out political programmes when I am in the mood, and Julian says to me: "Bravo! And your painting besides! .... Why, with such gifts you might become unique in Paris."

He thinks me very witty and clever, ruling our *salon* at home, and very influential.

Wednesday, February 5th.—There! we have been to Versailles, on the first day of the Gambetta Presidency. His speech, which he read, was received with enthusiasm, and had it been worse the result would have been the same. Gambetta read badly, and with a detestable voice. He has not the moderation of a President, and, after seeing Grévy, you wonder what this man is doing there. In order to preside over a Chamber it is not sufficient to be talented—a particular temperament is necessary. Grévy presided with mechanical regularity and precision. The first word of his sentences just fitted the last. Gambetta makes crescendos and diminuendos: he expands and contracts; he throws his head about, and has ups and downs. . . ! In short, he is either incoherent or very artful.

Sunday, February 16th.—On Saturday I received a scolding.

"I cannot understand how, with your abilities, you find so much difficulty in painting."

Well, I don't understand it either. I feel paralysed! I can struggle no longer! There's nothing for it but to die. O good God! have I nothing more to expect from anyone? And, worst of all, I have just filled the fireplace with wood, without the smallest necessity, for I wasn't cold, . . . while perhaps at this very moment there are many poor wretches who are hungry and cold, and weeping with misery. These reflections immediately check the tears that I am so fond of shedding. It's only a notion, perhaps, but I fancy that I should prefer complete misery; for then one is at the lowest ebb, and there is nothing to fear, and one doesn't die of hunger so long as one has any strength left to work.

Tuesday, February 18th.—A little while ago I fell on my knees beside my bed to ask God for justice—for pity, or pardon! If I do not deserve my agonies, let Him do me justice! If I have committed grievous sins, I ask Him for forgiveness! If He exists, and is really such as we are taught to believe, He must be just, He must pity and forgive. I have none but Him; it is therefore natural that I should go to Him, begging Him not to forsake me in my despair, not to lead me into temptation, and not to let me doubt, and blaspheme, and die. My sins are, no doubt, like my sufferings—doubtless I commit every minute petty sins which form an overwhelming total.

Just now I spoke harshly to my aunt, but I could not help it. She came in just when I was weeping, with my hands over my face, and was summoning God to attend to me a little. Oh, misery of miseries! They mustn't see me weeping, or they might think it was from love, and then I should . . . weep with rage.

Wednesday, February 19th.—I must do something to amuse myself. I say this in silly imitation of what is written in books. What is the use of amusing oneself? Even suffering itself is a kind of enjoyment; and then I am not like other people, and I hate all those things that they do to improve themselves—morally and physically—because I don't believe in it.

Nice, Friday, February 21st.—Here I am at Nice. I want to bathe in the air, to drown myself in light, and to listen to the sound of the waves. Do I like the sea? Why, I adore it. Rome is the only place in which I forget it . . . or nearly forget it.

I travelled with Paul. . . We were taken for husband and wife, which ruffled me immensely. As our villa is let, we go to the Hôtel du Parc—the old villa Aqua Viva,

in which we lived eight years ago. Eight years! and I am travelling for pleasure. We dine at London House. Antoine, the proprietor, comes and pays me his respects, and so do the *dames du comptoir*. Then all the cabmen smile and bow, and the one we engage pays me compliments on my having grown so much—he knows me. Another one offers his services, telling us that he served Mme. Romanoff. Next come my friends of the Rue de France. This is all very nice, and these good people have given me much pleasure.

The night is beautiful, and I escape all alone until ten o'clock in the evening; I go roaming by the sea-shore, and sing to the accompaniment of the waves. There is not a living soul in sight, and the scene is very lovely after Paris —especially after Paris!

Saturday, February 22nd.—How different from Paris! Here I awake without effort; the windows are open all night. The room I occupy is the very one in which we took our drawing lessons with Benza. I watch the sun gradually lighting up the trees near the fountain in the middle of the garden, as I used to see it every morning; my little study still has the same paper, the one I chose myself. It is no doubt occupied by some English barbarian. . . . I recognised the room by the paper, for they have built a passage, which confuses me; the room I am in was a conservatory. The weather is beautiful!

We dine at London House, and shall continue to do so as long as we stay at Nice. Everybody is to be seen there, especially during the carnival time.

Sunday, February 23rd.—Yesterday we went to Monaco. I can never express how this nest of cocottes repels me. I only stayed in the gaming-rooms for ten minutes, but that was enough for me, as I don't play. Mme. Abaza, who had

come there for the theatre, expressed her delight at meeting me again. We heard a comic opera in the new hall, which is very fine, and in the style of the day.

Garnier fecit!

I go for a walk in the twilight, and I admire the sea and the sky. What colour, what transparency, what purity, what perfume!

Monday, February 24th.—I am happy when I can ramble alone. The waves are incomparably beautiful; I went to listen to them before going to hear Patti. It had been raining, and there was a soft and delicious freshness in the air. It does one's eyes good to gaze at night into the dark blue of the sea and the sky. I was so absorbed that I did not notice that the sea had broken away a part of the Promenade, and I fell into this precipice of about two or three yards deep.

Paris, Monday, March 3rd.—I started yesterday at midday; the weather was superb, and I almost shed real tears when leaving this delicious and incomparable country. From my window I could see the garden, and the Promenade des Anglais with its Parisian elegance. From the passage I could see the Rue de France, with its old Italian buildings, and its alleys with their picturesque light and shade. And all these people who know me—"It is Mlle. Marie," they say as I pass.

As much as the people of Nice have made me suffer, do I adore the houses and streets. It is my own country, after all. Now I should like to leave Paris; my mind wanders, and I feel lost. I expect nothing more, I hope nothing more. I am desperate and resigned. I think and think; I seek, and finding nothing, I heave one of those sighs which leave me more oppressed than before. Come now, what would you do in my place?

Now that I am in this merciless Paris, I feel as though I hadn't looked half enough at the sea; I should like to see it

again. I have brought back with me poor Bagatelle, my dog who was run over at Spa, and has been so miraculously cured. It seemed a pity to leave him there all alone. You could not believe the goodness, faithfulness, and attachment of this animal. He never leaves me, is always under my chair, and hides himself with such a humble and pleading face when my aunt comes to remonstrate about the carpets.

Tuesday, March 4th.—I called to see Mme. G——, and we went out together; she paid a few calls, during which time I read the newspapers in the carriage. At her house we saw the Countess Murat, with her daughter-in-law. Ah, yes, M. G—— has at last obtained consent. We talk with enthusiasm about the departure of the Prince, then we deplore the dangers to which he may be exposed, and go into ecstasies over his energy. He did not ask anybody's advice.

And then if those good Zulus do eat Napoleon there will not be so very much to despair about. When he is dead his party disappears, and there are no further obligations; people will turn to that rascally Republic, which, after all, is the sister of the Empire.

Wednesday, March 5th.—To-morrow I begin work again. I give myself another year. One year in which I mean to work more ardently than ever. Of what good is it to despair? Oh yes, this is a thing we say when we feel in better spirits, but when despair takes possession of you . . . .

Despair, my angel, will not bring you anything, and as *there is nothing to be done* let us set to work! I shall have time enough to be discouraged afterwards. As this life must be dragged out in the hopes of a better fate, let us be busy in it. There is no way of getting out of it; is it not just the same thing whether I draw or read? You will think these strange reasonings to induce me to work? It is no longer even a makeshift! . . . . It is that I fear I may some day say to

myself—"If, instead of remaining at the studio, you had thought of self, you might perhaps have found . . . . "

Anything you like! There may be some way; but I know not what to do.

Really, it is horrible! I am always wondering if it would be possible to bring my father here. . . . . But, do you know what he is doing? He is having his house newly done up to receive us. Thank you! I have been there and have had enough of it. My aunt and mother are incapable of anything, and I am ashamed to admit that I am not able to compel them; even then nothing would come of it.

Just when we are giving up seeking is the time to find. In any case, painting can do me no harm. . . . . But I receive no encouragement! . . . . *Just the very opposite.* There, my angel, justify yourself for your want of intelligence.

Romance! stuff! Oh! Do you see? I write, I think, I dream, and then I stop short; and there is always the same silence, the same solitude, the room looks always the same. The motionless furniture seems to provoke and mock me! I am here fighting with this nightmare while others live!

Glory! Oh bother glory!

I will marry; why delay this event? What am I waiting for? If I give up painting I have a wide field before me. Then . . . . I must go to Italy and get married there. . . . . Not to Russia; to buy a Russian would be dreadful. Besides, in Russia I could easily get married, especially in the country; but I am not such a fool. At St. Petersburg? Well, if my father would consent, we might spend a winter there. . . . .

Next winter in St. Petersburg, then! I do not think I am fond of my art; it was a means, I give it up. . . . . Truly? Oh! I can't tell. . . . . Shall I give myself a year—the time for which we have hired our apartments?

To be or not to be?

A year is not enough . . . . At the end of that time I shall see if it is worth while going on. . . . . But in Italy,

and if I give up painting, I shall be hearing talk of young lady artists, that will enrage me and cause me to regret; and when in Naples or St. Petersburg, every time I hear praises of somebody's talent, how shall I be able to listen? And the foundation for all this would be my beauty. Supposing I do not succeed! *For it is not only necessary to please; you must please some given man.*

Directly I put art aside and admit the possibility of going into society, or of shining at the promenade or at the theatre . . . . I am rambling, I will go to bed. This thought of St. Petersburg really pleases me. However, at twenty years of age, I shall not be so very old. In Paris, there is nothing to be expected in the way of rich husbands; as for poor ones, Italy is much more convenient.

Saturday, March 8th.—I have been trying to model, but I have never seen how it is done, and know nothing about it.

The flower-stands and vases are filled with violets. I shall have some for a long time; they are in earth.

How beautiful is this blue satin, those violets, the light streaming from above, the harp. . . . Not a sound, not a soul. . . . I don't know why I am so afraid of the country; I am not afraid of it, ... but am not eager for it. . . . After all, it is very charming as a rest, but I am not tired, only dreadfully bored.

Sunday, March 9th.—Do you know that writing is a great consolation! There are things which would kill you if you couldn't *destine* them to be read by others, and so "divided to infinity."

I am pleased to find that a man like Dumas troubled himself about the quality of his paper, ink, and pens, because each time that some accessory prevents my working, I tell myself that it is idleness, and that great painters had no whims. . . .

But stop. . . . I can understand that Raphael, suddenly inspired, should have drawn his *Madonna della Seggiola* on the bottom of a cask; but I also think that this same Raphael must have had recourse to all his favourite tools in order to paint and finish off his picture; and had he been forced to paint somewhere against his will, he would have become as enervated as I do, ordinary mortal that I am, in Julian's studio.

Wednesday, March 12th.—I must go and hang myself! However mock-heroic and impossible and absurd this idea of destroying myself may seem to you, it must come to that at last.

I do not get on with my painting. It is true, however, that since I commenced painting I have worked anyhow, and with many interruptions; but that has nothing to do with the matter. I who had dreamed of being rich, happy, a leader of fashion, an attraction . . . . to lead, or I should say to drag out such a life!

Mlle. Elsnitz is my companion as usual, but the poor thing is so dull. Picture to yourself a tiny body, with a large head and blue eyes. . . . Have you ever noticed at the milliner's those wooden heads with pink cheeks and blue eyes? Well, that's it—the same in looks and expression. Added to this is a languid air, which you also see on these dummies which I have just mentioned; a slow walk, but so heavy that to hear her you would think it was a man; a weak and drawling voice; she takes in what you say with astonishing slowness. She is always absent, never sees anything at once, and after a while she stops in front of you and gazes at you with such a serious face, that she either makes you burst out laughing or puts you in a rage.

She often comes into the room and stands in the middle of the floor as if rooted to the spot, and looking as though she did not know where she was. Perhaps her most irritating

trick is her way of opening the doors; this operation lasts so long that every time I hear her I feel inclined to rush to her assistance. I know that she is young—only nineteen. I know too that she has always been unfortunate, that she is in a strange house where she has not a friend, not a soul with whom to exchange an idea. . . . It often grieves me to see her, and her gentle, passive expression touches me; and then I make up my mind to chat with her, to . . . . But it is no good; I find her quite as repulsive as I did the Pole and B——. I know it is wrong, but her idiotic look paralyses me. I know what a sad position hers is; but when she was with the Anitchkoffs it was just the same. When asking me the slightest thing, to play something on the piano, for instance, she goes through as much hesitation and torture as I should feel were I to *beg* some one to give me an invitation to a party or a ball.

However, I do not chat with anybody here, so she is not an exception.

I work at the studio, and when taking my meals at home I read papers or a book. This is a habit I should find it difficult to shake off. I read even while practising the mandoline. Therefore the poor little thing is not treated worse than the others. I feel remorse, but I can't help it.

I am intensely miserable when in her society. The drives I am obliged to take with her would be a perfect torture to me if I did not look out of the window, and by persistently thinking of something else manage to forget her. . . It is not difficult to do so—nothing could be more insignificant than the poor being, or more depressing! I do so wish that she could find some condition in which she might be happy, and so take herself off. I am ashamed to say that she spoils the desolate wilderness ot my life.

Oh, that painting! if I could only do it!

Friday, March 14th.—In spite of my remonstrances, Paul has just left. I got angry, and declared that he shouldn't go. He declared, upon his honour, that he would. I held the door; but, taking advantage of a moment's absent-mindedness, he escaped.

It was to prove that he could keep his word. He had sworn that he would go to-day. In short, it was the firmness of a weak mind who, feeling himself of no account in important things, makes up for it in trifles.

This saved me from fretting. I immediately got twenty francs from my aunt to send an abusive telegram to my father at Poltava, but at the same moment Rosalie came to tell me that I must not reckon on Champeau (a girl who sometimes makes my dresses), as she has typhoid fever. Her workwomen have left, and she is all alone. An idea struck me. I tore up the telegram, and sent the twenty francs to this woman.

There is nothing more pleasant than to do some good for which one gets no return. I would willingly go and see her—I am not afraid of typhus—but it would look as though I expected to be thanked; and besides, I might spend this trifle if I did not send it to her at once. . . I must confess that the pleasure of doing so would not then be so keen. I suddenly feel an impulse to boundless charity. To relieve the sorrows of others, when nobody thinks of lightening mine, would be rather *chic*, wouldn't it?

Saturday, March 15th.—If Robert Fleury—whom we call Tony in his absence—scolds me to-day, I shall give up painting. You know how much envy and unpleasantness my progress cost me. Each time I get into a difficulty people seem to say, "I told you so—it couldn't last!" My first efforts won compliments; then I arrived at a more difficult stage, and saw that it caused too much satisfaction around

me not to suffer considerably. This morning I dreaded my lesson, and while that animal of a Tony was correcting the others, and getting nearer and nearer to my place, I was saying prayers so fervently that Heaven seems to have heard me—for I gave satisfaction. Good heavens! what a load fell from my mind! Perhaps you can't imagine such emotions? Can you imagine me waiting in anxious silence fully conscious of the delight that would be felt if I received a snub? This time it would have been for good and all—for friends or enemies are the same in these things. However, it is past. Next week I shall have courage to endure any wrench.

Sunday, March 16th.—Coco is dead! He was crushed by a cart just before the door. When I called him to dinner I was told of it. After the grief which I felt at the death of Pincio the First, whose place the present *Pincia* is filling, this misfortune seems less. . . But if you had a dog born in the house—young, silly, playful, ugly, good-natured, and affectionate, jumping and looking at you with two eager and innocent eyes, like children's—you'd understand how much I suffered from his loss.

I wonder where the souls of dogs go? This poor little creature, with its long white and woolless body—for he had no more hair behind than in front—with one huge ear always pricked up and the other hanging down! in short, I prefer ten times over an ugly dog like this to one of those frightful beasts which cost so much.

He looked like one of the beasts of the Apocalypse, or one of the carved monsters on the roof of Notre-Dame.

Pincia does not seem to notice that her son has been killed; it is true she is expecting a new family.

They shall all be called Coco or Coquelicot. I think it is said that dogs have no souls. Why not?

Tuesday, April 1st.—Why should mirth be more agreeable than sorrow? We have only to make believe that *ennui* pleases and amuses us.

A reminiscence of the Enchiridion of Epictetus, and very appropriate; but I could reply, that first impressions are involuntary; so that however strong we may be, the first impression must always have given us the start, after which we may manage as we please, but in any case it must *always* have been so. It is by far the most natural course to continue in the direction of one's first impression, that is to say, the *natural* impression, to rely upon and strengthen the feeling experienced, than to divert or twist it, and to cripple one's feelings so far as to conform them one to the other or, rather, to confuse them all, to efface them, and to trouble no more about anything . . . . to cease living, which is after all what I wish to bring about.

It would be shorter to . . . But no . . . Then all would be over.

The most odious thing in the world is to be in it, to live unknown, to see no one of any interest, or have a chance of exchanging ideas with any one; to know neither the celebrities, nor the men of the day. . . . This is death, this is hell!

I will speak now of what are commonly called misfortunes. We ought not to rebel and complain; sorrows even are joys, and they ought to be considered as indispensable elements of life. Supposing I lose a loved one, do you think it is nothing to me? On the contrary, I should be in despair, I should weep and moan and cry out, and then this pain would gradually melt into long prolonged, perhaps abiding, sadness.

I don't say that this would be pleasant, I don't wish for it, I don't *prefer* it; but I can't help saying that it would be life and therefore enjoyment.

We lose a husband or a child, we are deceived by a

friend; and we loudly accuse our fate; I should very likely do the same. But these manifestations are in the nature of things, and God is not offended at them, and men are not *offended* either, knowing that these are the natural and inevitable consequences of the sorrow we endure. We groan, but we don't think in our inmost souls that these things *ought not to be*; we accept them almost unconsciously. We may even seclude ourselves, and afterwards retire to a convent—afterwards, you understand.

It may also frequently happen that we are happy when quite alone, that is to say with a husband, or with the parents of whom we must think and for whom we live; but as regards myself, I am speaking on behalf of persons who are quite alone. . . . . Besides, I have now a grudge against my family as one of the causes of my sufferings. Neither do I speak of the silent and unknown heroes described in novels by persons who invent them, or copy them from nature in order not to remain like them.

You imagine perhaps that I complain of a calm life, and that I wish for excitement? *May be*, but that's not it.

I like solitude, and I even think that if I *lived*, I should isolate myself from time to time to read, to meditate, and to rest; then it becomes a delight, an exquisite enjoyment. In the dog days you are glad to get into a cellar; but would you like to be there long, or for ever?

Now if some knowing fellow would be at the trouble to beat me in argument, he might ask me whether I would consent to purchase life by the death of my mother, for instance? To this I would reply, that I should not desire it even at the price of a life less dear, for, in the order of nature, one's mother is the person one loves the most.

My remorse would be horrible, and out of pure selfishness I would not consent.

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Thursday, April 3rd.—After all, life is pleasant. I sing and dance when I am all alone, for perfect solitude is a great enjoyment; but what a torment when it is disturbed by the servants, or by one's family! . . . Even one's family! . . . Listen! This morning, on returning from the studio, I imagined that I was happy, and you wouldn't believe how much affection I felt in my heart for all my people, and for my good aunt, who is all devotion and abnegation. But there it is, I am not happy!

Little Elsnitz embitters my existence. I no longer take tea because she pours it out, and when I am obliged to eat bread which her fingers have touched!!! I would run the risk of an aneurism, if by running madly along the stairs I could get the start of her and walk a few steps without her. When I want the decanter or the vinegar bottle, I take them from the opposite side, so as not to touch what she has touched. That poor girl has something of the insect about her, and her plaintive looks and black nails sicken me.

Saturday, April 5th.—Robert Fleury, being ill, scarcely corrected at all; besides which my work has not been particularly good. Sarah tries to reconcile me and Breslau; I make objections, but in my heart I should be glad.

The artificial leaves on the mantelpiece caught fire from the blue candles, and cracked the glass.

But misfortunes do not come because glasses break; glasses break because misfortunes are to happen. We should be thankful for the warning.

Sunday, April 6th.—I have a little morning hat, so stylish that I am not afraid to go and spend the morning alone at the Louvre; but as the hat is becoming, as well as *distingué*, I have made the conquest of a young artist, who has followed me all the time, and who risks a

bow in the passage where there is no one near; but I would not notice anything, so he was considerably abashed.

Tuesday, April 15th.—Julian came in and announced to us the death of our Emperor; I was so startled, that I did not comprehend what he said. Everybody got up to look at me; I turned pale, tears stood in my eyes, and my lips quivered. Accustomed to see me make fun of everything, the amiable Julian tried to laugh. The truth was, that some fellow had fired four shots point blank at the Emperor, but he was not hit.

And Julian slapped his thigh, saying that he should never have thought me capable of such emotion; nor should I.

Wednesday, April 16th.—Rather a funny conversation with Breslau; we were in the anteroom—I, she, and Sarah. I gave an orange to Sarah, who offered half of it to Breslau, and laughingly said—

"Take it; it is from me, and not from Mademoiselle Marie."

But as she hesitated, I stopped washing my brushes, and turning towards her, said with a smile—

"I offer it you."

She was quite taken aback, and accepted the orange with a blush; I also blushed.

"What it is to have oranges," I said as I peeled another; "take some more, Mademoiselle."

"Sarah, did you see how we both blushed?"

"It is so stupid," said Sarah.

"You are overwhelmed with my kindness," said I laughingly to Breslau, as I offered her another slice.

"You see I don't care a fig for you," she said to me, as she accepted it.

"Not less than I; but if you cared so little, you wouldn't have got so red."

"I don't care a fig for myself, too."

"Ah! that's all right then."

And as it was getting rather painful, I looked at them and laughed—"I admire you!"

"Me?" asked Breslau.

"Yes; you."

"You are quite right."

"Indeed!"

And that was all.

"Are you coming, Sarah?" asked Breslau.

I went back to my brush-washing.

How childish!

Friday, April 18th.—I have been looking for an Empire or Directoire head-dress, which led me to read the article on Mme. Récamier, and I am naturally depressed to think that I might have a salon, but have none.

The imbeciles will say that I think myself quite as beautiful as Mme. Récamier, and as witty as a goddess.

Let the fools talk, and let us content ourselves with saying that I deserve a better fate; and the proof of it is, that all those who see me imagine that I take the lead, and that I am a remarkable woman. People heave a deep sigh, and say, my turn will perhaps come. . . . I have got used to God; I have tried not to believe in Him, but I cannot succeed . . . . that would bring general collapse and chaos. I have only God—a God who takes note of all my trivialities, and to whom I tell everything.

Monday, April 21st.—Last day of the competition; there was considerable animation.

On Saturday I went with Lisen (a Swede) to see some artists at Batignolles, near the Montmartre Cemetery. I

have found out that what I dislike in Paris are the boulevards and new parts.

Old Paris and the heights, where I went on Saturday, breathe a perfume of poetry and peace which went to my heart.

Tuesday, May 6th.—I am very busy and contented; I was miserable because I had too much leisure—I see it now. For the last twenty days I have been working from eight to twelve, and from two to five, getting home at half-past five. I then work till seven o'clock; in the evening I sketch, or read, or play a little music, so that at ten o'clock I am fit for nothing but bed.

Such an existence leaves no time to think how short one's life is.

Music; the evening hour; the thought of Naples . . . . distract my attention. . . . Let's read Plutarch.

Wednesday, May 7th.—If this working fit would but last, I should think myself quite happy. I adore drawing and painting, composition and sketching, crayon and red chalk; I have had no wish to be idle, nor to rest.

I am happy! One month of such days represents the progress of six ordinary months. It is so absorbing, so interesting, that I fear it will not last. At such times as these I believe in myself.

Thursday, May 8th.—In my simple childhood, I thought, by the interest I felt in reading stories of the cardinals, at the A—— period, that I had the power to love. Recently I have read histories of painters with the same interest, and have even felt my heart beat at some studio stories.

Saturday, May 10th.—My painting is not bad, nor the

tone unpleasant. As for the composition, Julian thought it very good as regards expression, grouping, and arrangement, but said it was badly executed. He also added that this was not an important point in these competitions, which is quite comprehensible.

Monday, May 12th.—I look pretty, and am happy and in good spirits. We went to the Salon, and chatted about everything, for we met Béraud, the painter, whom we puzzled at the masked ball, and who passed us, not guessing who we were.

Breslau's picture is a fine canvas, filled with a large easy-chair of gilt leather, in which her friend Marie is sitting, in a dark-green dress of subdued tint, with something of grey-blue colour round the neck; in one hand she holds a portrait and a flower, in the other she has a packet of letters which she has just tied up with a red ribbon. The arrangement is simple, and the subject is well known. Admirable drawing, with great harmony of tone, the effect of which is almost charming.

I suppose I am uttering an enormity when I say that we have not a single great artist. There is Bastien-Lepage; where are the others? .... There's knowledge, facility, conventionality, school-work, plenty of conventionality, an enormous amount of it.

Nothing true, nothing that moves, strikes, thrills, or touches, nothing that makes you shiver or weep. I do not speak of sculpture; I do not know enough about it to give an opinion. But to see the utter want of solidity of the domestic or genre pictures, and these horrible pretentious mediocrities, and the portraits, either common or *good,* is enough to sicken you.

I have seen nothing good to-day but the portrait of Victor Hugo, by Bonnat, and, perhaps, Breslau's picture.

Breslau's arm-chair is out of drawing, the woman seems

to be holding on to it, because it seems to lean towards the beholder: it is a pity. I mention Bonnat because there is some life in what he paints, and Breslau because all the middle tones are so harmonious.

I cannot allow that it is right to give, as L—— does, the same toes to every woman . . . . it irritates and enrages me.

Wednesday, May 14th.—Instead of going to the Salon, I worked at my sketch . . . . "The Death of Orpheus."

I do not feel perplexed either with the composition or the drawing. I have got notions of glory and happiness, and of all that is most delightful in the world.

Friday, May 16th.—The Salon is a bad thing because, when you see the rubbish, the utter rubbish, which is there, you begin to think yourself somebody, when, in reality, you are nobody.

Sunday, May 30th.—Jeanne sat to me, and we kept her to dinner with us.

She is, I need not tell you, a woman well born, perfectly well bred, highly educated, and intelligent; she is badly dressed, and looks like a board, while, in reality, she has one of the most beautiful figures you could wish to see, though she is brown and thin.

She has magnificent eyes, her mouth is of the same width as her eyes, and as the breadth of her nose. Her nose is very large, but beautiful and noble in shape; and her neck is like a swan's. She reminds me of the Queen of Italy, although she is very dark; not, however, as regards her skin, for that is fairly white.

You must know that she married Baron W——, junior, an awful brute.

The poor woman was at death's door when her family came to her rescue by suing for a separation. Poor woman! she hates him.

In this case, you see, it would be better to drown one's self than to live with one's husband. But I don't think Jeanne capable of loving at all. She is a *femme de Temple,* if you have read *l'Homme-Femme.*

Thursday, June 5th.—After Jeanne had sat, we went together to Mme. de Souza, whose at-home day is Thursday. In the evening we went to the L——'s, and mamma accompanied me; she still wore mourning in order to make a better impression on her hosts.

M. de L—— lights a candle and takes us to look at the children, who are all in bed and asleep. Just like a guide showing you the curiosities in a museum. He carries off the guests in parties, and shows them the nine wonders of the world, which they really are considering the age of their father.

Saturday, June 7th.—Mme. de L—— sent all her seven children with three nurses to see us.

But first let me say that my painting was not bad in tone (that's the most important thing for me), but faulty in the composition! R. F. scolded me, but I need not fret too much about that, for in working hard at the colour I overlook the composition; but I will make up for that afterwards when I have conquered the colouring; you do not lose what you have by nature. But all the same I am in a dark cloud. To return to the L—— children, they are curiosities. They are accustomed to be trotted out to visitors, and to perform studied movements. In five minutes' time they were quite at home; they wanted me to draw their portraits, each one posed in his turn. I sketched them all in five or seven minutes; the eldest con-

sidered my sketch very good. Next he wanted me to put the number and name under each face.

I feel stupefied, out of my element, and bored.

Monday, June 9th.—No doubt it is the warm and heavy weather which makes me good for nothing. I have worked all day long, and, moreover, I have quite made up my mind not to shirk my work; but I feel much shaken.

To-night we are going to the Foreign Office ball. I shall look plain; I am sleepy and should like to go to bed.

I am not longing for a *succès d'estime,* and I feel that I shall seem plain and stupid. I do not even think of making "conquests" nowadays. I dress well, but I no longer throw my soul into it, and I never think about the sensations I may cause. I look at nothing and nobody, and am dreadfully bored. I care for nothing but painting. I have no wit left, no readiness of speech; when I speak I am dull or exaggerated, and . . . . I must set about making my will, for I feel that this cannot last.

Saturday, June 14th.—I have been drawing this week, and they consider that I have not done as well as I ought. I am sick of life!

Sunday, June 15th.—For the moment I cast away all my cares and have quite made up my mind to work.

Julian is a great man as regards the way in which he comprehends the duties which are incumbent upon me; and he says that I *must* succeed, just because . . . . We understand one another, dear posterity, do we not?

"*You must begin* next year," said the illustrious leader of the Folies-Julian.

Yes, it is settled; and you will see, old father Julian, that I *have something in me!*

To tell the truth, you encourage me for the sake of the

money I bring the studio, and for the honour I might bring. But then what does it matter, whether my work be good or bad, you will be paid all the same?

You will see, if I am not dead. My heart beats, and I am in a fever when I think that I have only a few months longer.

I will work hard, with all my might, all the time. To-morrow I will go to Versailles, but if I miss just to go to Versailles it will not matter—it will mean the loss of one afternoon in the week at the outside.

Julian has already noticed the renewal of steady work, he will see I never omit to do my weekly compositions. I have an album in which I design them, number them, and write the title and date of each.

Saturday, June 21st.—I have been crying for nearly thirty-six hours without stopping. Last night I went to bed quite worn out.

We had two Russians to dinner, Abigink and Sévastianoff, gentlemen-in-waiting on the Emperor, also Tchoumakoff and Bojidar; but I was good for nothing. My sceptical and chaffing wit was gone. I have sometimes lost relatives, and had other troubles, but I never remember mourning for anybody so much as for the one who has just died. This is all the more surprising that after all it ought not to affect me at all, I ought rather to rejoice.

Yesterday, at twelve, as I was leaving the studio, Julian sounded the whistle for the maid, who put her ear to the tube, and directly afterwards said to us in a voice full of agitation—

"Ladies, M. Julian asks me to inform you that the Prince Imperial is dead."

I assure you that I uttered a shriek, and sat down on the coal-box. And they were all talking together.

"A moment's silence, if you please, ladies. This is official,

the telegram has just been received. He has been killed by the Zulus, so M. Julian tells me."

This rumour had been already circulated, and indeed when the *Estafette* was brought to me I perceived in thick letters the words—*Death of the Prince Imperial.* I cannot tell you what a blow it was.

Moreover, to whichever party one may belong, whether one be French or not, it is impossible to help feeling the general stupefaction.

This frightful, this premature death, is a terrible thing.

But I will tell you what none of the papers will tell—namely, that the English are cowards and murderers. All this cannot have happened in the natural course; there must be one or several guilty wretches infamously bought. Should a prince, the hope of a party, be exposed to danger? And a son, too? . . . . No; I don't think there is a single wild beast who would not be grieved to think of the mother. The most appalling sorrows, the most cruel losses, always leave something, a gleam of light, of consolation and hope. . . . . Here there's nothing. It can be said without fear of contradiction, that there has never been such a sorrow. It was her fault that he left; she bothered him and tormented him, she did not give him as much as five hundred francs a month, and made his life wretched. The young man left on bad terms with his mother.

Do you see the horror of it all? Do you see that woman's state?

There are mothers as miserable, but not one of them can have felt the blow so much; for the pain is made as many millions of times greater in proportion to the noise and sympathy or even to the imprecations caused by this death.

The brute who broke this news to her would have done better to kill her.

I went to the studio, and Robert Fleury paid me a great

many compliments; but I returned home only to sob again. Afterwards, I went to Mme. G——'s, where everybody was in mourning and had red eyes—from the lodge-keeper upwards.

M. Rouher remained for half an hour speechless. We thought all was over with him; then he wept perpetually without stopping. Mme. Rouher had intermittent hysteric attacks all the evening, shrieking that her husband was dying and that she would die too.

Mme. G—— interrupts her, and says, with decision, "Really, at such times as these people ought to manage to avoid hysterics . . . . it is most inconvenient," she added, very seriously.

I was keeping back my tears, as they would not have understood what was the matter with me; but I could not help smiling when I heard Mme. G—— telling her tale to some ladies in mourning, and saying that Mme. Rouher, when she heard the news, fell flat down upon her back. Mourning is put on for six months. "We shall, no doubt, be sick of it before that time; but the first days, you understand! . . . ."

Those English have always been horrid to the Bonapartists, who have always been stupid enough to go to that despicable England, which I hold in perfect hatred. Do we not become very enthusiastic, very tearful, over a novel? Can we help being moved to our soul's depths by this frightful catastrophe, by this terrible, odious, and heartrending death? It struck me at once that C—— would turn towards the family of Jérome, and that was exactly what happened. In short, here is a whole party out in the cold. They want a prince even for the sake of appearances, and I think they will keep together. Some of them, those who have least compromised themselves, will go over to the Republic; but the others will continue to support some shadow or other. But who can tell? When the King of Rome died, was it not thought that all was at an end?

To die? at such a moment. To die at the age of twenty-three, killed by savages; and fighting for the English! I should think that his most cruel enemies must feel a sort of remorse in their inmost hearts.

I have read all the papers, even the insulting ones, and I have bathed them in my tears. Were I French, and a man and Bonapartist, I could not be more shocked and outraged or more distressed.

To think of this boy driven away by the low jokes of the dirty radical papers; to think of him being attacked and murdered by savages!

The cries he must have uttered, his despairing calls for help, the suffering, the horror of his helplessness! Dying in a horrible unknown corner, forsaken and almost *betrayed!*

But why so all alone, and with the English too! . . And his mother.

And the English papers have the infamy to insinuate that there was no danger in the place where they were reconnoitring. Can there be any security in such a country for a small party amidst savage enemies?

One must be a fool or an idiot to believe it. But read the detailed accounts. He was left there for three days, and that wretched Carey only noticed that the Prince was missing when it was too late.

When he caught sight of the Zulus he fled with the others, without troubling himself about the Prince.

No, it is awful to see it in print in their papers and to think that this nation has not been exterminated, that their confounded island cannot be annihilated with all its cold, barbarous, perfidious, and infamous inhabitants! Oh! if it had been in Russia, our soldiers would have sacrificed themselves to the last man!

And these scoundrels forsook him and betrayed him!

Only read the details and see if you are not struck

with so much infamy and cowardice! Is it right to run away and forsake one's comrades?

And will they not hang Lieutenant Carey?

And the mother, the Empress—poor Empress! All is at an end, lost and annihilated. Nothing left but a poor mother dressed in black.

Monday, June 23rd.—I am still under the sad influence of this terrible event. The public has slightly recovered from the shock, and is wondering through what criminal imprudence the unhappy young man was left in the hands of the savages.

The English press deplores the cowardice of the Prince's companions. And I, who count for nothing, gasp for breath and the tears fill my eyes when I read the lamentable accounts. I have never felt so upset, and the efforts I have been making all day to keep from weeping oppress me.

It is said that the Empress died in the night, but no newspaper confirms this fearful but consoling rumour. I feel such a raging in my heart when I think how easy it would have been to prevent this crime, this misfortune, this infamous occurrence. Troubled faces are still to be seen in the streets, and some of the newswomen are in tears. I am crying too, though I admit that I can't account for it. I should so like to be in real mourning with crape, it would be in keeping with my spirits.

"What is it to you?" they would ask. I don't know, but it makes me very sad.

There is no one here. I am shut up in my own room. I shall not have to act a part, so I burst into tears, which is idiotic, for it weakens my eyes; I felt the effects of it this morning as I worked. But I cannot be calm when I think of the fatal and truly frightful circumstances which accompany the Prince's death, and of the cowardice of his companions.

It would have been so easy to have avoided it!

Wednesday, July 2nd.—Having read other depositions of English soldiers, I came to the studio so upset that I could do nothing but scratch my painting and take my departure. Between this and Saturday I shall have time to do a profile of Dina, who has grown as beautiful as I have grown plain.

Wednesday, July 16th.—I am singularly weary; I have heard that the typhoid fever begins in that way.

I have had bad dreams. If I were to die? I am quite astonished that I do not tremble at the thought of death. If there is another life it must certainly be better than the life I lead here on earth. And if there should be nothing after death? That would be all the more reason for not being terrified, and for desiring the end of troubles without greatness, and torments without glory. I must make my will.

I begin to work at eight o'clock in the morning, and at about five I am so tired that my evening is wasted; in fact, I must make my will.

Monday, July 21st.—Decidedly we have no summer; it becomes colder and colder.

Our model this week for the whole day is a red-haired woman of astounding beauty—limbs like a statue, and a complexion such as I have never seen. She will not remain a model long, so we greedily take advantage of the time she is here.

Sunday, August 3rd.—My dog, Coco II., has disappeared. This happened while we were at the theatre. I was surprised at not seeing him dash to meet me when I returned, and I went to see if he were with the others. Then I was told that he was lost. You think nothing of

that, but I, who loved the creature dearly, who had named it before its birth, and who had become as much attached to it as it was to me! . . .

But you cannot understand what a grief this is to me. The dog never left me when I was at work. . . My people, who know that I am pained, keep mournfully silent. Mamma has been running about all the evening.

On coming home, I went out again to beg some policemen to bring him back if they found him.

All the servants were told they that must find the dog or leave their situations. This is the fourth dog in one year First of all Pincio, then Coco I., a week ago Niniche, and yesterday my dog.

Monday, August 4th.—I could not go to sleep. That poor little dog was constantly before my eyes—still so timid that he ran away from the concierge, not knowing where to go.

I even shed a few tears, and then asked God to let me find him again. I have a particular prayer which I whisper to myself when I want to ask for something. I don't remember ever having said this prayer without feeling relieved.

This morning they called me, and brought back my dog, and the poor wretch was so hungry that he didn't show so very much joy to see me again.

I had considered him as lost, and my family, to comfort me, kept telling me that he had been killed.

Mamma exclaims that it is a real miracle, for it is the first time we have found a lost dog. She would be much more surprised if I told her of my prayer, but I only mention that here, feeling dissatisfied in doing so. There are thoughts and prayers of so private a character that when they are repeated or written they make us appear stupid and ridiculous.

Saturday, August 9th.—To go or not to go? The boxes are packed. My doctor does not seem to have much faith in the efficiency of the waters of Mont Dore. But what matter, I am going for the sake of rest. And when I come back I must lead a life of amazing activity. I shall paint all day, and model at night.

Wednesday, August 13th.—We have been at Dieppe since yesterday, where we arrived at one o'clock in the morning.

Are all seaside places alike? I have been to Ostend, to Calais, to Dover, and I am now at Dieppe. It smells of tar, boats, cordage, and tarpaulin. It is windy, you are exposed on all sides, and feel like a vessel in distress. It recalls sea-sickness. How different to the Mediterranean! There you can breathe, and have something to look at. There are no nasty smells as here. I prefer a nice little nest of verdure like Soden, Schlangenbad, and what Mont Dore must be.

I come here for fresh air. Ah! well yes, no doubt the air is better when you get out of the town and the port. None of these northern seas please me, and the sea is only visible from the third floor of any of the hotels. O Nice, O San Remo, O Naples, O Sorrento!!! You are not vain words, exaggerated and profaned by the praise of the guide-books. You are really beautiful and divine!!!

Saturday, August 16th.—We laugh a good deal, and I am very much bored, but it is my nature to laugh, and my laughter has nothing to do with the humour I am in. I used to take an interest formerly in looking at the *passers-by* in a watering-place—it amused me.

I have become perfectly indifferent, and do not care whether I have men or dogs around me. I enjoy myself best of all when I am alone, playing or painting. I expected

my life to be something quite different to what it is, but since it has not turned out as I had hoped, I care not what happens. It cannot be denied that I have always been unlucky.

Tuesday, August 19th.—I took my first sea bath, and one thing with another makes me wish for an excuse to cry. I would rather be dressed as a mussel fisher than wear the dress of a *bourgeoise.* But after all, mine is an unhappy nature. I should wish for an exquisite harmony in every detail of life. Things which are considered elegant and beautiful often shock me by some lack of art or grace, or of an indescribable something. I should like to see my mother elegant, witty, or at least dignified and proud. . . . Oh, wretched existence! why should one be so tormented? . . .

You call these trifles? . . . Everything is relative, and if a pin hurts you as much as a knife, what have sages to say to that?

Wednesday, August 20th.—I do not think I shall ever have a sensation which is not mixed with ambition. I despise people who are nobodies.

Thursday, August 21st.—This morning I went to make a sketch of Mother Justin, who is seventy-three years of age, and who has had nineteen children. She deals in sand. People crowded round; but I pretended not to see any of them, then a company of soldiers came to do some sort of exercise on the beach, and soon afterwards there was a driving rain; but I will go back to-morrow. It amuses me so to study in the open air. These pictures will make my study look *chic.*

I hope you understand that I affect no artistic get-up nor any of the silly ways of people who smudge without talent and dress like artists.

Dieppe, Friday, August 22nd.—O sublime Balzac! You are the greatest genius of the world; in whichever direction we turn, we always find ourselves in your sublime comedy. You seem to have always lived and copied from nature. I have just seen two women, who by their origin, their looks, and their life, reminded me of Balzac, this great, unfathomable, and wonderful genius.

My people have just returned from the theatre. Mme. de S—— is said to be very plain; and that is the general opinion.

How is it that I think her so charming? I allow that she is not pretty, but with my artist's eye, I am charmed by a certain curve of the lips and by her nose which is so finely chiselled. She has no lines on her cheeks nor wrinkles under the eyes, and her manners are exquisite.

Friday, August 29th.—Fatalism is the religion of the idle and desperate. I am desperate, and I swear to you that I do not care for life. I should not utter this triviality if I only felt this occasionally, but it is my constant thought even in joyous moments. I do not fear death; if there is nothing after it, all is simple enough, and if there is another life I recommend myself to God. I do not expect to go to heaven, for there one is bound to endure the same torments as here below.

Monday, September 1st.—I hope you have noted the change that has little by little been going on in me. I have become serious and sensible, and then I am getting a better hold of certain notions. I now understand many things that I used not to understand, and of which I talked at random, without being convinced. I have discovered this morning, for instance, that a great affection for an idea is possible, and that we can love it as we love ourselves.

The devotion to princes and to dynasties touches and kindles me, it makes me weep, and might, under the direct impulse of something affecting, drive me to action; but in my inmost soul there is a something which absolutely prevents me from approving of myself in these movements of the heart.

Whenever I think of great men who have served other men, my admiration for them halts and disappears. This is perhaps a silly vanity, but I almost despise all these . . . servants, and I am really only royalist by putting myself in the King's place. Gambetta, for instance, is not a man of vulgar ambition; and the conviction which makes me think this must be strong and well-founded, or I could not say it with sincerity after studying the reactionary press for three years.

As far as I am concerned I might tolerate the idea of bowing before kings, but I cannot quite adore or esteem a man who would do it.

It is not that I refuse the honours . . . no; be it understood, I should be delighted to become the wife of an attaché to an embassy or a court. (But all these people need dowries, and are on the look-out for them.)

I am speaking here only of my inmost thoughts.

It is what I have always thought, but one cannot always express one's thoughts. I approve of a constitutional monarchy, as in England or Italy, and even then it revolts me to see these bows to the royal family—it is an unnecessary humiliation. When the king is sympathetic, like Victor Emmanuel, who represented and served a great idea, or like Queen Marguerite, who is adorable and kind, it is not so bad, but these are fortunate accidents. It would be much more natural to have an electoral chief, naturally sympathetic on that account, and surrounded by an intelligent aristocracy.

The aristocracy cannot be destroyed, nor can it be created

in one day; it must keep itself up, but need not necessarily hedge itself in with stupidity.

The *anciens régimes* are the negation of progress and intelligence!

We exclaim against certain individuals, but of what use is that? Men pass away, and when they are no longer wanted, they can be shelved. It is said that there are many black sheep among the Republican party. I told you months ago my opinion on this matter.

I hear them talk of absurd hatred against the persons of kings; but that's not the question. It is not the man who is bad, but the office which is useless.

I respect illustrious families; they have been, they are, and they will be; they ought to be honoured by their country, but that's different from being stupidly and irrevocably saddled with one man and his posterity. But no, none of that; I say nothing against the power of race, rather the contrary.

Cæsarism copies the Romans. Why copy? If the people are deceived by intrigues and disloyal manœuvres, it will be their own fault. But with hereditary kings, the people dispenses with all efforts of intelligence, and has not even the chance of choosing well once in ten times. It's all uncertainty, routine, imbecility, and cowardice. If the people are stupid, and choose badly, they deserve nothing better. These remarks are replies to things which are often said against the Republic.

But to be clear. . . . My Republic is an enlightened, polished, and aristocratic Republic. How can I express it? . . . .

Athenian, *he* called it.*

* Aristocratic—this requires reflections and explanations. Aristocracy of race *absolutely confirmed* by manners and education, in default of intelligence. Yes, for in social relations these are things, the influence of which cannot be denied. Besides, there is only one equality possible, it is equality before the law; all other equalities are wretched farces invented by the enemies of liberty, and demanded by the ignorant.

Wednesday, September 3rd.—The arrival of the political exiles, flaunting red caps and sashes, is a bad thing. These people ought never to have been brought back. They had become accustomed to live out there, and they will now be strangers here. God only knows what complications may arise from this return of husbands or wives after ten years' absence!

I have no time to tell you my attitude towards the opinion which demanded this return.

Paris, Wednesday, September 17th.—To-day is a Wednesday, a favourable day; a 17th, a date still more favourable, on which I am beginning to prepare myself for sculpture. I made inquiries as to studios.

Robert Fleury came yesterday to the school; there was not much to correct, so he gave me some good advice, exhorting me to work out the painter's side, in which I have hitherto been deficient, in spite of my qualities of composition, drawing, character, likeness, &c. And now, instead of drawing, I am going to model by gaslight. You understand. I do not neglect colour, for I paint while there is daylight, and as soon as it has gone I model. Is that settled? Yes, certainly.

I went for a walk with Amanda (the stout Swede), and she told me of her visit to Tony (who was very nice to me yesterday), and with whom she talked about all the pupils. He told her that A—— would always fail in drawing and construction, &c. The fact is, she produces absurd pictures—swollen heads and crooked eyes, &c. As for Breslau, he said that she has not made *enough* progress, and Julian added that her talent is nothing but perseverance. Emma is clever, but lazy, and she has wild ideas. And myself, extremely talented, and, at the same time, studious, hard-working, and serious; astonishing and rapid progress; very good drawings; in short, "a concert

of praises." Then it must be true, since they say so to strangers. Anyhow, it gives me courage, and I will work more, and better.

I long to go into the country, real country, with trees, grass, and a park, full of verdure, as at Schlangenbad, or even Soden, instead of that dull and barren Dieppe. And they say I don't love the country! I don't like the country in Russia, the neighbours, the house, &c. . . . but I adore the trees and the pure air so much, that I wish I could spend a fortnight in some very green and very fragrant corner. How I should like to go to Rome! But of Rome I seldom speak, even in this journal; the subject excites me too much, and I wish to remain calm.

It was in crossing the Tuileries gardens that I was seized with thoughts of country life. But how can I help it? I love the country as much as I hate the bare and windy beaches . . . . But to go to Switzerland for a fortnight with my family would be a terrible bore. Worries, recriminations, and all the accessories of domestic happiness.

Wednesday, October 1st.—Here are some papers, and I have just been reading the two hundred pages which compose the first part of Mme. Adam's review.

It has upset me; and I have left the studio at four o'clock to go for a walk in the "Bois," wearing a new hat, which makes a sensation, but now I don't care. I find Mme. Adam very pleasant.

I think you know me well enough to understand the influence of all these vital questions on my poor mind. There is nothing to be done in the matter of ancient fidelity . . . I still love violets, but simply as flowers. I pass on to the Republic, and new ideas.

To-day, here am I, entirely possessed by the *Revue Nouvelle*. Who knows whether, at a given moment, I shall not become enthusiastic over Prince Napoleon, whom I like

better than Napoleon III., and who is really somebody? You must understand that I am not joking, and that I am as advanced as it is possible to be. We must move with the times, especially when we really feel the desire and irresistible need to do so.

Saturday, October 11th.—I left off the head in the middle of the week, consequently, when Robert Fleury was passing from the large studio to the small one, I hid behind the cloaks; but he saw me, and made me a friendly reproach, and as I was replying he walked on, shaking his head and looking back at me, which caused him not to look in front of him, and to flatten his nose against the door, and me to laugh. So he was very cold to me when correcting my torso, and said not a word in its favour; another time I might have had a little more success. So here I am, miserable, distracted, offended, ruined, and if Julian had not comforted me a little about the composition, I should have thrown myself on the floor in despair. Every Saturday costs me dear in emotion! . . . . If the professors could suspect the torments I suffer, they would not have the heart to say nothing.

Saturday, October 29th.—My painting is much, much better. Yesterday we did the "one hour sketch" for our places, and this morning they are laid out in the little room where they shut up Tony; but he absolutely refuses to number them, saying that it is impossible, that the work of one hour is nothing, and that he is quite willing to number them at haphazard with his back turned. If this is not very serious, it is rather amusing, for we were listening at the door.

"Mademoiselle Marie," said he, "you are young; I could just as well have placed you first; this does not mean anything; another time you must give me your week's studies,

according to which I will place you; there's no sense in this."

With No. 3 I shall have a very good place for the competition.

Gambetta has come back to Paris.

Thursday, October 30th.—France is a charming and amusing country with its riots, revolutions, fashions, wit, beauty, and elegance—everything, in short, that gives charm and piquancy to life. But do not look for either a serious government or a virtuous man (in the classical sense of the word)—no, nor a love-marriage . . . . nor even for true art. The French painters are very fine; but, except Géricault (and at this moment Bastien-Lepage), the divine afflatus is wanting. And never, never will France produce what Italy and Holland have produced in a special kind. A beautiful country for gallantry and pleasure, but for the rest . . . . However, it always has a something, while other countries, with their solid and respectable qualities, are sometimes tiresome. But if I complain of France, it is because I am not married. . . . For young girls, France is an infamous country, and that is not saying too much. There could not be more cold cynicism in the uniting of two animals than is seen here in marrying a man and woman.

Commerce, traffic, speculation, are honourable words when properly applied, but they are infamous when applied to marriage; and yet there are no words more appropriate to describe French marriages.

Saturday, November 8th.—I have finished the portrait of the *Porteress*, and it is very like her. It causes immense pleasure in the lodge, the daughter, son-in-law, granddaughters, and sisters, are all in raptures.

Unfortunately, Tony has not shared this enthusiasm. He

has commenced by saying that it is not bad . . . . adding, "this isn't going as well as it should."

There is no denying that I have more talent for drawing than for painting. The drawing, construction, form, all that comes of itself; but the pictorial side does not develop with equal facility. He does not like me to lose my time in this way. I must get out of this, I must do something to remedy it.

"You are daubing, that is evident, and as you are extremely talented, and have great prospects, it annoys me."

"It does not please me either, Monsieur, but I don't know how to change it."

"I have long wished to speak to you on the subject. You must try in every way, perhaps it is only a question of finding an outlet."

"Tell me what I must do, a copy, a plaster cast, or a still-life piece? I will do anything that you tell me."

"You will do all that I tell you. Oh, well then, we shall get out of it. Come and see me next Saturday, and we will talk about it."

I ought to have gone to him on a Saturday long before this, all the pupils do so. Certainly he is a good fellow.

Monday, November 10th.—I went to church yesterday. I go from time to time, so that it may not be said that I am a Nihilist.

I often say, for fun, that life is only a transit. I wish I could really believe it, it would console me through all these miseries, all these brutish griefs, these ignoble slights. The whole world is so given to mischief-makers. It is by feeling this disgust and astonishment for every-day tittle-tattle that I discover that I am free from all these nauseating pettinesses.

Friday, November 14th.—If for several days I say nothing, it is because there is nothing interesting to say.

Until now, I have been charitable to my kind; I have never said nor repeated the evil that people talk; I have always defended any one attacked in my presence, always with the interested notion that perhaps as much might be done for me. I have always defended even those I did not know, at the same time praying to God to have it repaid to me. I have never seriously had an idea of injuring anybody, and if I desired fortune or power it was with ideas of generosity, goodness, and charity, the greatness of which astonish me; but it doesn't succeed.

I will, of course, continue to give twenty sous to a beggar in the street, because these people always bring tears into my eyes; but I really think I shall become bad. It would be beautiful, however, to remain good, though soured and miserable. But it would be amusing to become spiteful, ill-natured, slanderous, and mischievous. . . . Since it is just the same to God, and He takes no account of anything.

Furthermore, we must believe that God is not what we imagine. God is perhaps Nature itself, and all the events of life are presided over by chance, which sometimes brings about strange coincidences and events which make one believe in a Providence. As for our prayers, our religions, and our conversations with God . . . . I am bound to consider them useless.

To feel an intelligence and a strength capable of moving heaven and earth, and to be nothing! I do not call out, but all these torments are written on my face. People think when you are silent that there is nothing the matter; but those things always will keep coming to the surface.

Saturday, November 15th.—I admire Zola, but there are things that every one says, and which I cannot resolve to say, or even to write. However, in order that you shall not think they are horrors, I will tell you that the worst is the word *purgé*. I regret to write such a word here. I do not hesitate

to use the word *canaille* and others of the same sort, but as to those little innocent nastinesses they disgust me.

Wednesday, November 19th.—Robert Fleury came this evening, and besides giving me advice we spent a pleasant evening together round the samovar in my studio, especially as he explains to me excellently what to do for the lamps. Tony is neither paid nor interested, and, besides, he is a serious man; he repeated to-night what he said to Mme. Breslau, that in the whole school, only her own daughter and myself possessed exceptional aptitude. All the others are worth nothing. It amuses me to see him thus pass them all in review, treating their pretensions with such scant ceremony.

He praises me behind my back only, but he persists very much in wanting me to continue, adding that I am certain to succeed; for an amateur I already have talent, and that I am right in looking higher; that with a more consistent course I should make more progress, that he will pay special attention to me; that he will come and give me advice at home; that he advises me not to work always at the studio, but to take a model home sometimes, and to model in the evening. He will come and give me the first hints, and then, one evening, he will bring Chapu to see me.

In short, I am absolutely under his wing, so to repay him somewhat I give him an order for my portrait, a small sized one; and that is what spoils my happiness, for I am afraid it will cost too much.

This man has been most amiable, all the evening chatting and giving me advice. What bothers me is doing my copies.

Saturday, November 21st.—I went to take him my copy. "It is not yet broad enough, not yet firm enough."

I will do some more next week: two heads by Rubens, copied by Robert Fleury, senior—a great artist he—and also a little tiny canvas by the same, but original.

As I very much admire the sketch which he has made for his ceiling at the Luxembourg, he (Tony) offers it to me in the most gracious manner, saying that it is a great pleasure to him to give it to somebody who can understand and who appreciates it. . .

"But, Monsieur, there cannot be any lack of people who appreciate your painting." . . .

"Ah, that is not the same thing, not the same thing at all." . . .

I am already getting bolder, and am now scarcely afraid of him. After having seen him once or twice a week for two years at the studio it seems to me quite funny to be talking with him, and that he should help me on with my pelisse. A little more still and we shall be a pair of friends. Were it not for that portrait I should be quite happy, for my master is as good as possible to me.

Monday, November 23rd.—We have been to invite Julian to dinner; he has made twenty thousand difficulties saying that it would take away all his authority over me, and that we should not get on at all, especially as the slightest appearance of favour from him to me would look like shameless nepotism. People would say that we ask him to dine, and that I do what I like with him because I am rich, &c. The good man is right. For the rest it is an excellent system of perfidy. The Spaniard used it with Breslau, who ended by being rude to me, all through hearing herself so often called my chambermaid.

Tuesday, November 24th.—The studio at No. 37 is hired and nearly furnished.

I have spent the day there; it is very large, with grey

walls. I have brought to it two bad Gobelins which hide the lower part of the wall, a Persian carpet, some Chinese mats, a large square Algerian cushion, a stand for the models, beautiful draperies, large satinette curtains of soft but warm colour.

Many casts: the Venuses of Milo, of Medicis, and Nîmes; the Apollo, the Faun of Naples; an *écorché,* some bas-reliefs, &c.; a coat-stand, a fountain, a mirror worth four francs twenty-five centimes, a clock worth thirty-two francs, a chair, a stove, an oak table with a drawer and the top arranged as a colour box; a complete tea set, an inkstand and a pen, a pail, a can, a quantity of canvases, some caricatures, some studies and sketches.

To-morrow I will stick up several drawings on show; but I am afraid they will make my paintings look worse. A flayed arm and leg, life-size, a skeleton, a box of tools, and then I should still want the Antinoüs.

Wednesday, November 25th.—We have been to see Father Didon at the Dominican convent. Need I tell you that Father Didon is the preacher whose fame has been spreading perceptibly for the last two years, and of whom all Paris is just now talking. He had been informed of our visit. Directly we arrive they go to call him, and we wait for him in a reception cell, glazed throughout, with a table, three chairs, and a good little stove. I had already seen his portrait yesterday, and I knew that he had splendid eyes.

He appears, looking very agreeable, very much a man of the world, very handsome in his beautiful white woollen gown, which reminds me of the dresses I used to wear. But for the tonsure, his head would be in the style of Cassagnac's, but more enlightened, the eyes more frank, the attitude more natural though very lofty; a face which is beginning to look coarse and which has the same disagreably crooked look about the mouth as Cassagnac's; but with a great air of

distinction; having no ultra creole charm about him, with an ivory complexion, a fine forehead, his head erect, hands adorably white and beautiful, a gay air, and as much as is possible, a jolly good fellow. You would like to see him with a moustache.

Much ready wit in spite of great assurance. One can see very plainly that he knows the full extent of his popularity, that he is accustomed to receive adoration, and that he is sincerely delighted with the sensation he causes around him. Mother M—— had naturally told him beforehand by letter what a wonder he was going to see, and we talk to him about painting his portrait.

He has not refused, but said that it would be difficult, almost impossible, for a young lady to paint Father Didon's portrait. He is so conspicuous, and so much sought after.

But that is the very reason, idiot! . . . . I have been introduced as his fervent admirer. I had never seen him, nor heard him; but I imagined him just as he is, with his inflexions of voice passing from caressing tones to almost terrible outbursts, even in ordinary conversation. It is a portrait that I feel thoroughly, and if it could be managed I should be a most fortunate person. He has promised to come and see us, and for a moment I wished that he might not keep his promise, but that is stupid and false. What I wish for at present is that he may consent to sit. Nothing in the world would suit me better as an ambitious artist.

Thursday, November 26th.—We go out in a sledge with Mme. G——.

The evening ends up in farce. The ladies, the princess, Alexis and Blanc, go to the Variétés, while Dina, the Count de Toulouse, and myself, take out a champagne supper from the cupboard, and, after having supped, we arrange four covers to have it thought that there is company, and I pour

white wine and water into the empty champagne bottle, which I cork carefully; the same trick for the *foie gras* which I fasten up again. They will all be coming home to supper. May they have good appetites!

Sunday, December 14*th.*—Bertha called for me, and, accompanied by Bojidar, we went on foot to explore the Quartier Latin, Place Saint-Sulpice, Rue Mouffetard, Rue de Nevers, the Morgue, Rue des Anglais, &c.

We took the tramway for a quarter of an hour, and then we began walking again; this lasted from three to seven o'clock. There is nothing so adorable as old Paris; it reminds me of Rome and Dumas' novels, and Notre Dame de Paris with Quasimodo, and a heap of delightful and ancient things.

We have bought some chestnuts at a street corner, and we then spent twenty minutes at a sockseller's, where we spent nearly nine francs, and then at another's, who nearly abused us for beating her down:—"What, Madame, you make a fuss over seven francs, and you do not hesitate to give two hundred francs for a fur cloak!"—I was wearing one worth two thousand francs.

At the corner of a street, as our socks make no noise, we let Bojidar go on, and we hide behind a door; but he soon finds us, and we go to two contractors for removals to order two four-horse vans for removing M. A——'s furniture.

Bertha quietly gives particulars: two grand pianos, a bath, wardrobes with plate-glass doors, china, a billiard table, &c.; then we feel inclined to go in everywhere and talk nonsense to every one; it was seven o'clock, however, and we had to take a cab, but after a few steps the horse falls down, and we get out. They pick up the animal, and we go on again. Without reckoning that in the tramcar there was a very simple couple next to us, whom we astonished

by telling each other stories, like that of the young lady who, in a railway accident, received such a violent shock that it sent her knees into her chest and out through her back.

Sunday, December 28th.—Paul is to be married, and I consent, I will tell you why. She adores him, and wishes very much to marry him. She is of rather a good family, well known, of the same province, a neighbour, pretty well off, young, pretty, and, to judge from her letters, good-natured. And then she is anxious for it. It is thought that she is a little bit elated because Paul is the son of a *Maréchal de Noblesse*, and has fashionable relatives at Paris. All the more reason why I should consent.

Thanks to Rosalie's carelessness my letter to Paul never reached him. Mamma has consented, the girl has sent her the following telegram:

"Pleased, delighted, my deepest thanks to your mother; come back as soon as possible—

ALEXANDRINE."

They say that the poor little thing dreads the Paris family, and me, so proud, so haughty, and so hard. No, I am not the one to say "No"; for never having loved as she loves, I will not take it on my conscience to cause annoyance to anybody. It is easy enough to say that we are on the point of turning ill-natured; but, when the occasion comes for causing pain to a fellow-creature we do not think twice about it. If I have worries, shall I cure myself by worrying others? It is not at all out of goodness that I am kind, but because I should have it on my conscience, and it would torment me. Really selfish people ought never to do anything but good; in doing evil one is too unhappy. It seems, however, that there are people who love to do harm . . . . Each one to his tastes.

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Especially as Paul will never be anything more than a gentleman farmer.

Wednesday, December 31st.—I must be sickening for some illness. I feel so low that I could cry for nothing. After leaving the studio we went to the Louvre shops. It would need a Zola to describe the teasing, busy, disgusting crowd, running, pushing one another; those noses in the air, those searching eyes. I felt faint with heat and nervousness. Mamma sends to the beautiful Alexandrine Pachtenko (God forgive me !) a simple and appropriate letter, and the following is what I wrote to her on white smooth paper, on which was a little "M" surmounted by a gold coronet:—

"DEAR DEMOISELLE,—My brother will bring you mamma's consent. For myself, I send all good wishes for your happiness, and I hope you will make our dear Paul as happy as he deserves to be. Awaiting the pleasure of seeing you amongst us, I embrace you cordially.

"MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

What else can I say? Paul with his herculean figure and good looks could make a better marriage. He makes this for the sake of the girl, so I accept it. What a wretched end of the year! . . . I think I will go to bed at eleven so as to sleep at midnight instead of boring myself . . with telling my fortune.

CHAPTER III.

PARIS, MONT DORE, 1880.

Thursday, January 1st.—I went to the studio in the morning, so that having worked on the first day of the year I may work all through the year. Afterwards we went out to pay some calls, and then to the Bois.

Paul went away this evening at seven o'clock. Mamma went alone with him to the station; the train is too affecting. I let him go without more emotion than if he had been going to town; and if I had gone to the station I should certainly have cried.

Saturday, January 3rd.—I cough very much, but, for a wonder, far from diminishing my good looks, it gives me a languid air which suits me.

Monday, January 5th.—Well, I am going on badly.

I begin work again; but as I have not had a complete change I feel a profound languor and discouragement. And the time for the Salon is approaching! I go to talk it all over with the great Julian, and we are of opinion, especially he, that I am not prepared for it.

Let us see; I have been working for two years and four months, without deducting lost time nor travelling. It is little, but it seems enormous. I have not worked enough, I have lost time, I have slackened! . . . In a word, I am not ready. "The prickings of a pin drive you mad," says Edmond, "but you can stand a well-directed blow with a club." It is true. The everlasting comparison . . . Breslau. She commenced in June, 1875—that makes four years and a half, and two years at Zurich or at Munich,

total, six years and a half, without deducting travelling or lost time, as in my case. She had been painting for rather more than two years when she exhibited. It is a year and four months since I commenced painting, and I shall not be able to exhibit with as much honour as she.

Oh, for myself, I should not care—I could wait. I have courage, and if I am told to wait a year I reply with sincerity, "Very well." But my friends — but my family — they will no longer believe in me! I might exhibit, but what Julian wanted was that I should paint such a portrait as would cause a sensation, and I shall succeed but indifferently. That's what it is to ride the high horse. There are some in the studio five times less advanced than I am, who have exhibited, and nothing has been said, it is true. But I . . . Why do I do it? . . "You do not want to give lessons, nor to receive an order at fifty or a hundred francs. You want to make a sensation. To exhibit anything as the others do, well, it is unworthy of you."

This is also my opinion. But what of my friends, my family, and Russia! . . .

You see, Julian says that I draw ten times better than Manet, and then he adds, that I do not know how to draw. *You* ought to do more.

Ah! as for *me*, I am very much bothered, and I try to get out of it.

Mme. G—— comes to inquire about me, for, as you know, I have a beast of a cold.

Saturday, January 17th.—The doctor says my cough is purely nervous. It is possible, for I have not got a cold: I have neither a sore throat nor a pain in my chest. I simply can't breathe, and I have a stitch in my right side. I come in at eleven o'clock, wishing all the

while that I might fall seriously ill, so as not to go to the ball. I dress myself! I look beautiful!

Tuesday, January 20th.—I come home from the studio and learn that Mme. G—— has been here, expecting to find me confined to my room, and she is furious that I am not nursing myself as old people do.

The tickets promised for to-morrow have been given to Mme. de Rothschild.

I would willingly give ten thousand francs for a permanent pass. Not to have any longer to ask for tickets; to be independent! Oh! barren aspiration, barren and miserable intrigue; sterile discussions with my family, sterile evenings spent in talking of what I should like, without a step being taken to bring it about! Sterile and miserable efforts!

Saturday, January 31st.—To-night (Saturday), concert and ball in aid of the sufferers from the floods at Murcia, at the Hôtel Continental, under the patronage of Queen Isabella, who, after being present at the concert, came down to the ball-rooms, where she remained for an hour.

I don't care over much for dancing, and to find myself thus in men's arms does not particularly amuse me. In fact, I am quite indifferent to it, for I could never at all understand the emotions caused by waltzing which they speak of in novels.

I think only of those who are looking at me when I am dancing.

Thursday, February 5th.—I should always like to spend my time like to-day—working from eight o'clock till twelve, and from two till five. At five, the lamp is brought in, and I draw till half-past seven.

To dress from half-past seven to eight, dine at eight o'clock, then read, and to go to sleep at eleven.

I own, that from two till half-past seven, without stopping, is rather tiring.

Tuesday, February 10th.—I have had a long interview with father Julian about my picture for the Salon. I have submitted to him two proposals, which he approves. I will draw them both, that will take three days, and then we will choose. I am not advanced enough to succeed brilliantly with the portrait of a man—an unsatisfactory subject; but I can paint a figure (life size, of course), and the nude, which, as Julian says, attracts me as it does all those who have a consciousness of power. This man amuses me; he builds up a future for me; he will make me do this and that *if* I am good, and since our last interview I have been good. Next year it must be the portrait of a celebrated man, and a picture. "I wish you to rise from the ranks with a bound."

For this year, I, the "inventor," have thought of this—A woman at a table, her chin resting on her hand, and her elbow on the table, reading a book; a bright light falling on her beautiful fair hair. Title: "*La Question du Divorce,*" by Dumas. This book has just appeared, and the question excites everybody.

The other subject is simply Dina in a skirt of white *crêpe de chine,* sitting in a large antique chair, with listless arms and fingers interlaced. A very simple attitude, but so graceful that I hastened to sketch her one evening when she was sitting thus quite by chance, and I was wanting to get her into position. It has a slight suggestion of La Récamier, and that the chemise may not be too indecent, I will add a coloured sash. What pleases me in this second subject is the complete simplicity, and the pretty bits to paint. Oh! it's a real pleasure.

To-day I feel *elated;* I feel quite superior, great, happy, and clever. In short, I believe in my future, that's all.

Monday, February 16*th.*—We go to see the Queen, who is very gracious.

I am still on the look-out for a lot of things for my picture.

To-night, at the Théâtre Français, the first performance of Sardou's *Daniel Rochat.* Quite an event. We have an excellent box with six seats. A brilliant house, plenty of people, and the representatives of the Government.

As to the play, I must see it again; it seems to me that it contains tedious passages and that the dialogue is too Swiss in style. But there was so much noise and applause; people whistled, applauded, and protested so much, that one heard only half of it. The hero is a great orator, a sort of atheistic Gambetta; the heroine is an Anglo-American Protestant young lady, liberal and republican — but a believer.

You can imagine what an effect this subject may produce just now.

Wednesday, February 25*th.*—In hunting after models at Léonie's I make the acquaintance of nearly all the honourable Baudouin family. It is pure Zola, the Zola of *Nana;* and indeed this is the name I give to Léonie. A mixture of naïveté . . . and of astonishing depravity.

At present she is not sitting. "I used to sit when I didn't know what I was doing, but it is not respectable to sit. I am in a costumier's; I don't find it amusing, you know, but HE wishes it."

"Who?"

"My friend . . . . "

And her sister tells me that she is crazy about him, especially since he has taken to beating her.

Sunday, February 29*th.*—Julian came to see my picture. He is very pleased with it, and has spoken about it to

Tony, who is very . . . very busy, but who will come with pleasure when I send for him.

Wednesday, March 3rd.—Now I must go out no more at night so that I may be able to get up feeling refreshed, and work from eight o'clock. I have only sixteen days left.

Friday, March 12th.—Julian came to see my picture; he thinks the plush table, the book, and the flowers, are very good. The rest will come; the whole thing, he says, is spirited, has go about it, and is bold, almost brutal; I who was weeping this morning, came home at six o'clock consoled and confident . . . . and I find mamma in tears, with two telegrams—the first from my father.

If mamma goes to-morrow Dina is to go with her; I have only seven days; I shall never find a model; even if I find one to-morrow I shall have only six days, and it won't be possible.

Then I am done for, and I will not hide from you that I am crying with vexation and because I succeed with nothing. An idea strikes me, a sensational subject, which might be effective in spite of imperfection in its execution; which would give me this year what I could hardly have expected in the coming one . . . and all is lost. Everything goes to ruin. The work half finished, the tide in my affairs, all lost without return. This is downright ill-luck. Judge me as you please. Paul's romances left me calm, but this makes me desperate and exasperates me. I don't know how to explain it, there is something more than selfishness in it. And even if it should be selfishness I am unfortunate enough and forsaken enough to be egoistic.

Then all my dreams for this year vanish. Wait again! . . . A whole year. Do you think that little? I have so many daily causes of suffering now; I hoped to find

some comfort in my painting, and that's the way it turns out.

And my poor painting sacrificed, my ambitions disappointed, the pleasure I might have had, lost or postponed, will that console or save Paul and his fiancée over there?

Sacrifices and troubles are three times more painful when unnecessary.

Now it's all spoiled, and made a mess of. As for them, it will all come right, they will marry; a month sooner or later is of no consequence, and if the marriage does not take place perhaps it will be fortunate for both of them. While for me here, promptitude is urgent. A week's delay and I am a year behindhand. But what can I do? It is perhaps absurd, but I am disheartened enough to cry about it just as I did about the Prince Imperial.

People will think I am fretting about Paul, the idiots!

All of us have interests here below; he has his fiancée, his love, and a small property at Poltava; with me it is another thing—quite *another* THING—which seems to hold all I desire, all that I lack, all human joys, all happiness, all satisfactions. And must I wait another year still, I, for whom, more than for any one on earth, life is a race!

Monday, March 15th.—Unnecessary tragedies. All is arranged; on Saturday we received reassuring telegrams; there is nothing serious the matter.

I have written to ask Tony to come, and I am very frightened.

I so dread what Tony may say. I feel that it is so presumptuous in me to exhibit, though Julian has told me that if all exhibitors were as advanced as myself, it would be a very good thing. I feel that I shall die with shame when he comes to look at my picture. I don't know whether I shall venture, and still I shall not be able to go away if he comes.

It seems incredible that I should be talking thus, and still it is true! If I said such a thing in public, people would think I was joking.

Friday, March 19th.—At a quarter to twelve, Tony!

"Why did I not begin earlier? It is very beautiful, charming; but what a pity," &c., &c.

In short, he reassures me, but we must ask for a delay.

"You could send it as it is, but that it's worth while; that is my private and sincere opinion. Ask for more time, and you will accomplish something good."

Then he pulls up his sleeves, takes the palette, and touches the picture a little everywhere to make me understand that it lacks light. But I will work at it again . . . . if I can get the delay.

He stayed more than two hours. He is a charming fellow; I am much entertained, and feel in such good spirits that I don't care much what may happen to the picture. In a word, his few touches are an excellent lesson.

At two o'clock I go in one direction and mamma in another to see what can be done. I take Dina with me, and we go to the Chamber of Deputies. I ask for M. Andrieux (to beg him to recommend my request to M. Turquet, the under-secretary to the Beaux-Arts). I have to wait an hour in vain. We go to the police office, but he is not there. I then go to Doctor K—— with a letter, in which I explain to him what I want.

When I get home I learn that the Prefect of Police has been to see us, to place himself at our service, and that Julian is at No. 37 with mamma.

Julian is delighted with the picture.

"You are as strong as a man, nothing astonishes me from you."

He says all these pretty things before Mme. Simonides,

who had come to see my picture, and before Rosalie in my absence.

I am quite elated and joyous even before I hear the result of mamma's proceedings with Gavini, who has written to Turquet. In fact, I have been allowed the delay—a delay of six days. I do not exactly know whom to thank, but to-night I go to the opera with the Gavinis. I thank father Gavini, as I think it is to him that I owe it. I feel radiant, triumphant, and happy.

No, but my picture! Julian raves about it; Tony also has found it good in tone, harmonious, beautiful, forcible; and Julian adds that it is bewitching, and that the Swedish colourists at the studio are fools to think that beautiful colour consists in some particular process.

"Here's a creature who has done a pleasing thing, but not pleasing in the sense of *pretty;* no, something that takes you by storm."

So I shall finish it.

A tremendous day.

Saturday, March 20th.—I go out to finish the formalities of the bulletins, &c. At the Salon there is a crowd, and pictures, and carts, and artists. I go to the Under-Secretary of State to ask him to sign my bulletin, the delay being accorded to Mlle. Bashkirtseff, whereas my picture is signed "Russ."

Turquet is very nice; he tells me that he has heard of my picture. Then . . . . In short, I cannot remember exactly all the places I went to.

Sunday, March 21st.—Saint-Marceaux comes to advise me. I like him, but he leaves a feeling of uneasiness in me. He looks absent, he walks quickly, speaks quickly. A bundle of nerves. I am like that, too; but he leaves me all the same a feeling of uneasiness, although he spoke well of my painting.

But there, when people say nothing I am dissatisfied, and when they praise me, I imagine that they are treating me as a little girl, and are making fun of me. Indeed, this evening I am not in such a mood as yesterday; that is because the right arm is too long . . . . it is two centimetres out, and I, the severe draughtswoman, am humiliated before a sculptor like M. de Saint Marceaux.

Monday, March 22nd.—Tony is astonished that I have been able to do what I have done in so short a time.

"It is really the first time that you are applying your studies?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Well, do you know this is not at all bad."

He takes off his coat, seizes a palette and paints a hand for me, the lower one, in that whitish shade which is peculiar to him.

He touched up the hair, which I entirely repainted, as well as the hand. So he works at the hand, and I am amused, and we talk.

All the same, excepting the background, the hair, and the plushes, it is dirty colour. It's all muddled. I can do better. This is Tony's opinion, but for all that he is pleased, and says that if there were any possibility of my picture being refused at the Salon he would be the first to tell me not to send it. He says he is astonished to see what I have done; it is well conceived, well arranged, well worked out, it is harmonious, elegant, and graceful.

Oh yes, yes! but I am dissatisfied with the flesh! And to think that it will be said that it is my style! It is muddled. I am obliged to glaze it. I who adore bold and simple painting done at the first stroke. I assure you that it costs me a great deal to exhibit a thing when I feel so dissatisfied with its execution; something so different from my usual style . . . . it is true I have never done

anything yet that has pleased me . . . . but in short it is dirty, it is patched. Tony says that Breslau shows this time the influence of Bastien-Lepage. She feels my influence as I feel hers. Tony is as good as possible. And to say that I could have done better! Confounded modesty! Cursed want of confidence! If I had not been hesitating and asking myself, *To be or not to be!* . . . Let us not commit the folly of lamenting over what is done.

I don't know why I am thinking of Italy to-night. These are burning thoughts which I always try to avoid. I have given up my Roman readings because they excite me too much, and I fall back on the French Revolution or Greece. But Rome and Italy. When I think of that sun, that air and the rest of it, I feel crazy. Even Naples. . . . Oh Naples, in the evening. . . . And the curious part is that there is not a man in the case. When I think that I might go it maddens me. So much so that the scenery of *Masaniello* causes me a sort of emotion.

Wednesday, March 24th.—Tony has come, but does not meddle with my painting. At six o'clock we are still talking.

"There certainly will be many things at the Salon," says Tony, "twenty times inferior to this, but there is all the same no absolute certainty, for the poor jury see about six hundred pictures a day, and often in disgust refuse a thing in a bad temper; but you have this in your favour, that it's effective, and the tones are pleasant. And then Lefebvre, Laurens, and Bonnat are quite my friends."

What a nice fellow this Tony is, and I like him all the better because I don't think he is happy. The influence of his father's name and his rising talent bring him the medal of honour in 1870. Then little by little all is forgotten and disappears, he makes an enemy who, possessing

some influence with Wolff of the *Figaro*, makes this terrible journalist hostile to him. Moreover, he does not know how to blow his own trumpet, and while people like Cot paint large portraits, and are well paid, he paints small ones which bring him money but no satisfaction.

This good Tony gave me some sober, but well meant, encouragement.

I can, if I like, have "much talent," he says; and by that he does not mean merely, as mamma does, what I possess already. "Much talent" is what he himself has; what Bonnat, what Carolus, what Bastien have.

I must make serious studies, and paint torsos at home, so as to prepare myself for painting portraits. I must not think of anything except my painting, but give myself up to that.

As regards women, none but Breslau and myself understand the nude so thoroughly. Few artists can draw from the nude so well as she or I; in fact, it is very astonishing what I have just accomplished in eighteen days, after two years' study. But I must not be satisfied with results like those—"not with such satisfaction."

"Monsieur, it was not for myself."

He is quite aware of this; but I must avoid submitting to these influences, and look higher to more serious work. *I can attain whatever I wish.* Genius is not acquired; but to acquire talent, I must work, and, above all, I must not put any faith in the compliments people pay me; he himself says nothing but the truth.

"But, Monsieur, if you said anything else I should be distressed."

Well, then, I must work and be diligent, and I shall attain what I desire.

Thursday, March 25th.—I am giving the finishing touches to the picture, but I cannot work any more, for there is

nothing more to be done, or else all is to be done over again. It is finished as an ill-arranged thing. My picture is some five feet high, with the frame.

The young woman is sitting at a table covered with plush of a rich old green shade, and is resting on her right hand, with her elbow on the table; she is reading a book, near to which is placed a bunch of violets. The white of the book, the tone of the plush, and the flowers beside the bare arm, have a very good effect. The woman is in a loose dress of very light blue damask, and a fichu of muslin trimmed with old lace. Her left arm falls naturally on to her knees, and seems scarcely to hold the paper-knife. The chair is in dark blue plush, and the background is of seal-skin. The background and the table are very good. The head is a three-quarter face. Dina's adorable light gold hair is loose; the shape of the head is shown, and the half-braided hair falls down her back.

At half-past three M. and Mme. Gavini arrive.

"We found it impossible to let Marie's picture go without seeing it. It is the departure of the first child."

What kind people they are. He, Gavini, accompanies me to the Palais de l'Industrie in a carriage, while two men carry the picture. All this makes me feel hot, cold, and frightened, as if I were at a funeral. And then the large rooms, the sculpture gallery, the staircases, how it makes my heart beat! While they are gone to fetch my receipt and my number, the portrait of M. Grévy, by Bonnat, is brought in, but it is placed against the wall, where the light prevents it from being seen. In the entire hall there is only *the* Bonnat, my *own*, and a frightful yellow background. The Bonnat seems very good, and I am quite astonished to see my own picture there.

It is my first appearance—an independent act in public. One feels alone on an eminence surrounded by water . . . But it is done; my number is 9,091.

"Mademoiselle Marie-Constantine Russ."

I hope it will be received. I send the number to Tony.

Friday, March 26th.—We went to confession for communion to-morrow.

Our priest confesses like an angel—that is to say, as a sensible man: a few words and it is over. But you know my opinion on the subject. I should have been dead with despair by this time if I did not believe in God; but for all that, the formulas and legends leave me unaffected.

Wednesday, March 31st.—I am unsettled; I ought to have taken Tony's advice and rested. I go and worry Julian, to whom I give the following note:—

"I, the undersigned, undertake to paint every week one head and one cast or else a life-size study. Besides which I will do three compositions a week or only one, but in that case properly painted. If I do not keep to the above conditions, I authorise M. Rodolphe Julian, artist, to proclaim everywhere that I am absolutely unworthy of any kind of interest.

"MARIE RUSS."

I then go to see Tony, but he is occupied with a model, and I stay only a few minutes.

"You are very gifted," Tony says to me, "and must really do something."

"If you let yourself go I can answer for nothing more," says Julian; "you are already behindhand; as for success, you will succeed, but you ought to have succeeded as a phenomenon. You must, you absolutely must, make a great hit at the next Salon; you must paint a picture, something good, you really must!"

Wednesday, April 7th.—We must not forget to say that Julian has informed me that my picture has been received;

and, curiously enough, I feel no joy about it. Mamma's delight bores me. This success is not worthy of me.

Saturday, April 10th.—I am not satisfied with what I have exhibited. There are four admission numbers. Breslau had No. 3, while I was admitted simply without a number. If Breslau got only No. 3, it is just that I should have nothing; but never mind. I must rise out of this; I have been neither complimented nor scolded to my face. It is not worthy of me; I must rise out of this, I must, I must, I must! I am humiliated that I exhibited what I have; it is pretty, but unworthy of me.

Saturday, April 17th.—In the afternoon I spent a long hour with Tony; there I made the acquaintance of Robert Fleury, senior, who was very agreeable, and who told me that he had worked at drawing for four years before he commenced painting. When the father had gone, we chatted and I smoked a cigarette. As to the painting I brought, he found it good, and told me to continue. Julian also said that next to my Salon picture, it is the greatest effort I have made.

Thursday, April 22nd.—Altogether, my picture will be either placed to disadvantage, and not seen, or else in the full light; and in this case it will cause me annoyance. People will say that it is loud and pretentious, or else egregiously weak, and what not.

Monday, April 26th.—I have no place at the studio; a charming American is going to sit for me on condition that I give her the picture.

Her little face captivates my fancy, and it will be almost a picture. I am dreaming of an exquisite arrangement, and the girl is kind enough to say she will sit for me,

and will be satisfied with a small picture which I will paint afterwards.

If I had not a picture at the Salon the pupils would never have confidence to sit for me.

Julian thinks that Tony worked at my picture, and you remember what Tony had done. The tone was too dark and he put in some lights, but I conscientiously repainted it all. As to the hand, he changed the drawing as he went on painting; but the day before the last I shortened the fingers, which caused me to repaint everything. Therefore, there is not even any drawing by him; he only told me how to do it. In fact, I did it honestly, and after all it is nothing to boast of.

To-night we were at Madame P——'s, a retired magistrate's family, I think. They have taken the Hôtel d'Alcantara, with a long and narrow gallery having a single window facing the Champs Elysées. The hotel is curiously situated, thanks to this tongue of ground reaching to the Champs Elysées, it is convenient for fêtes, though the gallery is narrow. Nice kind people; but a curious company, and the most old-fashioned of costumes; no one of note. I feel sleepy and angry. And that dear mother of mine gets up to introduce me to the Chilian or Mexican "who laughs." He seems to be always grinning, and makes a frightful grimace, owing to a *tic*, added to which he has a large full-blown face. He possesses twenty-seven millions, and mamma thinks that . . . . To marry that man! it is almost like a man without a nose. Oh! the horror of it! I should not mind taking an old man or an ugly one, they are all the same to me, but a monster, never! Of what good would be the millions with such a ridiculous lump? There were several acquaintances, oh how dull! Some amateurs, who set your teeth on edge with their music; a violinist without an ear, and a fine fellow who, after casting a conqueror's glance round the room, rests one hand on the piano and

sings Schubert's serenade in an attitude . . . . Oh, so ridiculous! I cannot understand how a gentleman can play the low comedian at a grand soirée. The women, with their head-dresses and that yellow powder which looks so dirty in the hair, appeared to have mattresses on their heads, and looked as though they had been rolling in the straw. How ugly! how idiotic!

Tuesday, April 27th.—I ran away, as I am impatient to have my first sitting with the American. She resembles Mme. Récamier; I push her hair up *à la Psyche*, and put her into a cambric slip, with short and puffy sleeves, a pink ribbon round the waist, under the breast, and a straw-coloured scarf, which she winds round her arms.

She is exquisitely slim, even surprisingly so for eighteen; the slimness of fifteen; her complexion is radiantly fresh, and her hands very white.

Thursday, April 29th. — To-night we dine with the Simonidès. Everything is quaint in their home (I met the lady at Julian's); the husband is young and handsome, the wife is beautiful and over thirty-five. They are very much attached, live retired, receive only a few artists, and make extraordinary drawings and paintings, a sort of imitation of the Renaissance; subjects which astonish you by their naïveté—the death of Beatrice; the death of Laura; the woman who put her lover's head into a pot of basil, from which flowers sprung; and all this in a style which looks as though it had been done centuries ago. Madame dresses in the fashion of Boccaccio's time. To-night she wore a white Japanese crape dress, most delightfully soft, with long and narrow sleeves, like those of the Virgin, and second sleeves tied at the back; the skirt straight and plain; a sash of old ribbon, giving her a short waist. A bunch of lilies of the valley was placed in her bodice, she wore pearls round her

neck, and earrings and bracelets of antique workmanship; with her pale complexion, her black and wavy hair, and her gazelle eyes, she looked like a fantastic apparition. If she only had the sense to arrange her hair in a simple fashion, instead of fluffing it out and making a fright of herself, she would be very remarkable.

We had been for a quarter of an hour in the studio, after leaving the dining-room, where a very good dinner had been served, flowers, fruit, and very artistically arranged, and I was accompanying Madame, who was singing some old Italian classic songs, when mamma came to call for us to go to church. . . . It is Passion week, but we arrive too late. I say my prayers in my own room.

To-morrow is varnishing day; I will take my little American with me, so that she may sit nicely.

Friday, April 30th.—My little American, whose name is Alice B——, comes at ten o'clock, and we start together. I want to go almost alone, to see first of all where my picture has been placed. So I go to the Salon, feeling very nervous, and imagining the most awful things, so that they may not come true, and, indeed, we foresee nothing. My picture is not yet hung; I find it at nearly twelve o'clock with a thousand other unhung pictures, but it is in the outer gallery, where I had been shocked already to see Breslau's picture.

You know how Wolff treats this gallery, nevertheless it contains works by Renoir, and other known artists. A—— is exhibiting a large and handsome portrait of Léon Say. Not at all bad, very bold, but the hands look like the work of Robert Fleury, senior. May God forgive me this supposition if it be not true. The fact is that Léon Say having posed for the head only, it was easy to get help. The portrait has a very good place. As for Breslau, placed like me in the gallery, and on the line like me, she has done a very

indifferent piece of painting, or, at least, a thing as unpleasant to look at as possible. It is the portrait of Mgr. Viard. I think she failed by attempting too great a delicacy of tone. All is grey; the background looks like a panel of greyish wood; the chapel and oratory decorations, and the chair, are all dirty in colour, the head also.

But there are such heads—it might have looked better with a different arrangement; as it is, the drawing is good, and there is a certain breadth of treatment in the hands. The other pupils are not worth mentioning.

As for Bastien-Lepage, his picture strikes you at first as empty, an effect of the open-air. Joan of Arc—the real one, the peasant girl—leaning against an apple-tree, holding a branch of it with her left hand, which is perfection, as is also the arm; the right arm is hanging down beside the body; it's an admirable thing. The head thrown back, the neck stretched forward, and eyes *looking at nothing*—clear and wonderful eyes. The effect of the head is bewildering; it is the peasant girl, the child of the fields, stupefied and suffering under her vision.

The orchard which surrounds the house right at the back is Nature itself, but there is . . . . a want of perspective; it seems to come forward, and injures the figure. The figure is sublime, and caused me such a strong emotion, that I am keeping back tears as I write.

Tony's ceiling is very charming, very well done, and pleases me.

These are the chief things. After breakfast, we were going — at least, I thought so — to see the Salon all together. But no, my aunt went to church, and mamma wanted to go also, and it was only when she saw my look of astonishment and indignation that, with a very bad grace, she agrees to come. I don't know if it is my modest place which infuriates them, but that is not a reason, and it is really hard to have such a family. At

last, feeling ashamed of her indifference—or I don't know what to call it—mamma goes, and we three—Dina, she, and myself—meet first the whole atelier, and then some acquaintances, and then Julian.

Saturday, May 1st.—I have just endured one of those formidable, stupid, and unnecessary crushes! To-morrow is Easter. This evening, or to-night, we go to High Mass, where all the Russian colony is assembled, beginning with the ambassador and all his suite. All that have any claim to fashion, beauty, and vanity are to the fore. Great review of Russian women and their dresses — the general topic of gossip.

Well, at the last moment they bring me my new dress, which looks just like an ugly bundle of old dirty gauze. I go, notwithstanding, but no one can tell the rage it put me in! My waist was lost in a crooked and badly-made bodice, my arms deformed by sleeves too wide and awkward—in short, a pretentious get-up. And, to crown it all, this gauze, which I only saw in the daylight, looks quite dirty in the evening. What efforts it cost me to keep from tearing it all up, and running out of the church! To be dressed badly for want of better is bad enough; but to be able to be well dressed and to look such a monster as I do to-night! And of course my hair feels the effects of my humour—it gets untidy, and my face burns. How ignoble!

This morning I went to the Salon to see Julian's young man, and he has promised me to do the impossible. I was in a black woollen dress—very simple—but my face was fresh, and I was much looked at.

And to-night! Oh, confound it!

Thursday, May 6th.—Many compliments from Julian for my painting.

Friday, May 7th.—Mme. Gavini came again to-day to tell mamma that I fatigue myself too much. That is true, but it is not the painting. I should not be tired if I went to bed at ten or eleven o'clock, but I am awake till one, and I get up at seven.

Yesterday it was the fault of that idiot of an S——. I wrote, and he has come to explain himself. Then he went to talk nonsense with my aunt: then it was I who waited for him to hear some stupid words, savouring of love. He said "Good night" to me twenty times, and twenty times I said to him "Go," and twenty times he begged to kiss my hand, and I laughed, and at last, "Well, you may, I don't care," said I. So he kissed my hand, and I have the agony of confessing that I was pleased, not because of the object: but there was a . . . heap of reasons, and a woman is a woman for all that. This morning I still felt the kiss on my hand, for it was not the ordinary kiss of politeness.

O young girls!

Do you think I am in love with this broad-nosed youth? No, you don't?

Well, the A—— affair was nothing more. I tried hard to fall in love, and with the help of the cardinals and of the pope . . . . I became roused, but with love? Ah no! Well, as I am more than fifteen, and less silly, I invent nothing, and the affair remains as it is.

The kiss on my hand displeased me, for the very reason that it gave me pleasure; one ought not to be a woman to such a degree, and I determine to look coldly at S——; but he is such a good fellow, so simple, that I should be silly to act any comedy; it is not worth while, it is better to treat him like Alexis B——, and that is what I do. Dina, he, and I, stayed till eleven o'clock, Dina listening, and S—— and I reading verses and translating Latin.

I am quite astonished to see that this young man is very advanced, at least very much more so than I am: I have forgotten much, but he perfectly remembers his studies for the Bachelor of Arts degree and for his licence. I should never have thought he was so educated. Only fancy! I should like to make a friend of him .... No, I don't like him well enough for that, but simply a friendly acquaintance.

Saturday, May 8th.—When people talk in a low voice I do not hear. This morning when Tony asked me whether I had seen any of Perugino's work, I said "No," without understanding.

And when I was told of it afterwards, I got out of it, but very badly, by saying that indeed I had not seen any of it, and that, on the whole, it was better to admit one's ignorance.

Besides, Tony was very pleased with my head. Breslau asked permission to stand as my model. I generously consented, and we present to the view of the studio the touching sight of our friendly feelings. They are really childish; but, for my part, I laugh at it all.

Tony says it is a very good beginning, that I have but to continue. I appear to be competing with Breslau, and so far, at all events, I have beaten her. (We shall take it up again next week after it's dry.)

This amuses the whole school, and everybody wants to sit for me. I tease poor Breslau by telling her that my picture has found a buyer at fifteen hundred francs, and that I am hung in the circle gallery. It is sad, but true, my painting is not first-rate; I confess to it quite willingly, as it is only natural after two years' work, and my first exhibition, with but a fortnight to do it in .... But the administration has been relatively just. None but the worst things

are hung in this renowned gallery, and there isn't a decent canvas in the whole . . . .

Monday, May 10th.—It's strange that when I want to fight against my inclinations, I have never yet succeeded. I have never even tried to struggle; all is limited to a resolution taken in advance, and a line of conduct never followed; everything is done on the spur of the moment, just as it pleases me, and as it happens. O diplomacy! . . . . Or rather, quite frankly, it is that I find it unpleasant not to follow my own bent, and I follow it.

Thursday, May 13th.—I have such a singing in my ears that I am obliged to make great efforts in order that it may not be noticed.

Oh! it is horrible. With S—— it is not so bad because I am sitting near him; and besides, whenever I like, I can tell him that he bores me. The G——s talk loud. At the studio they laugh and tell me that I have become deaf; I look pensive, and I laugh at myself: but it's horrible.

Sunday, May 16th.—I went early to the Salon alone; only those people who have cards were present. I had a good look at the *Jeanne d'Arc,* and especially at Morot's *Good Samaritan.* I sat opposite Morot's picture with an eye-glass, and studied it. This picture pleases me better than any I have ever seen. Nothing jars, all is simple, true, and well done; it is quite natural, and does not remind one in the least of that frightful and conventional academical beauty.

It is very magnificent; even the donkey's head is good, the landscape, the cloak, the very toe-nails. It is successful, truthful, and well done.

The *Jeanne d'Arc* has a sublime head.

These two pictures are in two adjoining rooms; I went from one to the other. I was studying Morot's and thinking of that good fellow S——, when he himself passed just in front without seeing me, and as I was going away I saw him pointing from the garden to my picture, and talking about it to another person, who had the look of a journalist.

And then Saint Marceaux's Harlequin! After the close of last year's Salon, I thought that the medal of honour had excited me when the work was no longer there to re-assure me; after six months I felt sure I had exaggerated Saint Marceaux, but this Harlequin opens my eyes again.

The first day I stood there transfixed, not guessing whose it could be; such an unsatisfactory subject, but what talent! It is more than talent! He is a thorough artist, and so is not as much talked about as some other manufacturers of sculpture! They are all manufacturers beside Saint Marceaux.

Tuesday, May 25th.—Mme. Goup . . . . came to sit for her portrait; and afterwards I made a composition.

It is a subject which fascinates me—Mary Magdalene with the other Mary, at the tomb of Christ. No conventional sanctities, but to paint it as you imagine it happened, and to feel what you do.

Thursday, May 27th.—How lovely is the early morning! but listen! I am about to begin . . . .

I first of all greeted the morning before my open window with the harmonious sounds of my harp, like the priests of Apollo; and then thought of my two women beside the tomb.

I should like to go to Jerusalem, and to paint this picture from native heads, and in the open air.

Tuesday, June 1st.—I think atheists must be very

miserable when they are timid. As for myself, when I am frightened, I call upon God, and all my doubts melt away through egoism. This is a bad feeling, but I am not anxious to adorn myself with virtues which I do not possess. I feel that it is quite ridiculous enough to display all one's little weaknesses and meannesses. In 1873 I went to the International Exhibition at Vienna, when the cholera was raging at its highest, under the shield of the following verses from Psalm xci. I give them word for word:—

"He shall cover thee with his wings; under their protection shalt thou be safe: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day:

"Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Yesterday I thought of those divine words. I read them over with enthusiasm; the same enthusiasm as I used to feel in childhood; I did not foresee that they would serve me to-day.

I have just made my will; it is enclosed in an envelope addressed as follows:—"To M. Paul Bashkirtseff, Poltava;" in my own hand, in Russian.

"I will come and drag you by the legs after I am dead if they do not carry out my wishes!"

S—— remained; at first we were simply chatting. My aunt did not leave my side, and she bored me, so I seated myself at the piano; he then told me something which made me turn cold: his sisters have arranged a marriage for him, but he does not love the woman they want to give him.

"Then do not marry her; believe me, it is madness."

Afterwards we played at cards, *aux bêtes*, which is a favourite game amongst Russian servants.

"Is it Mme. de B—— you are going to marry?" I wrote on a book which I passed to him.

"No, the lady is older," he replied by the same means.

We then filled six pages with these phrases, which it would be amusing to keep.

In fact, he loves me, he adores me, and the phrases revolve round the burning subject.

I forbid him to joke, and he replies that it is I who am making fun of him. My aunt remarks every now and again that I am silly, and that I ought to go to bed, and I tell her that I am ill, and that I am going to die. After this singular correspondence I am almost certain that he loves me; to-night there were on his side many very meaning looks, and pressings of my hand under pretence of feeling if I am feverish. However, this comes to nothing; but I should like nevertheless to keep this young man by my side, not yet knowing what I shall make of him. I shall tell him to ask mamma—that will give me time. Mamma will refuse, and that would be another delay . . . and then I don't know. It is something even not to know.

Monday, June 14th.—I am reading over the past, of which I am passionately fond. I remember when C—— used to come in, it seemed quite to dazzle me; I can neither describe his manner, nor my impressions. . . All my being seemed to go out to him as I offered him my hand. Then I felt myself uplifted, and freed from all fleshly bonds.

I felt wings sprouting, and then a mortal terror the hours should pass so quickly! And I did not understand it. . . What a pity that the nature of my writing does not permit me to isolate interesting facts—things are all mixed. And then, to tell the truth, I rather affected to interest myself in everything to show that my whole

existence was not wrapped up in C——. But when I try to live these times over again I am shocked to find them surrounded by everything else. But isn't that like life itself? Still there are things, events, and men that one would like to isolate and shut up in a precious cask with a key of gold.

"When you feel yourself superior to him he will no longer influence you," Julian said.

Was it not the thought of painting his portrait that drove me to work.

Wednesday, June 16th.—We visit the Salon at eight o'clock, where I meet Saint Marceaux. We exchange civilities, and I say to him stupidly: "You never come to see us." "I am so busy!" Only fancy making such a reproach, it is stupid. Now I shall be thinking that Saint Marceaux will not care about meeting me. No, look you, I must succeed with something. I must be thought somebody by men like Saint Marceaux. And now I have only a few months left before commencing my Salon picture. And I had the chance of going to St. Petersburg to get married! No, I will remain here, to work; I will not go before the winter of 1881-82. Confound it! There'll still be time. Yes, I remain, and I work; Oh! yes, yes, you shall see. I am better again, nearly well, and to-morrow I return to the studio again for good.

Friday, June 18th.—I have been working all day. My model is so graceful and so pretty that I have been postponing the painting from day to day. The preparation was good, and I was afraid of spoiling it. A real emotion to begin with, but it seems to be getting on very well.

In the evening, S——. His melancholy look I attribute to love. However, there is something else; he is leaving

for Bucharest or for Lille, in the capacity of manager of his brother-in-law's bank. But also, and above all, the marriage! Ah! he holds to it. I only smile and call him a presumptuous and daring fellow, and explain to him that I am without dowry, as my dowry will be spent on trifling feminine things; that he will have to lodge me, feed me, and take me out.

Poor fellow, I felt a little sorry for him all the same.

I think he is not best pleased at going away. . . . Mont Dore, Biarritz, all fade away. . . .

He has kissed my hands a hundred times, begging me to think of him.

"You will sometimes think of me? Oh, say, I implore you, that you will think of me!"

"When I have time."

But he begged so much that I was obliged to say a very faint "yes."

Ah! farewells are always tragic; at least, on his side. We were both near the drawing-room door, and to give him a noble remembrance of me, I gravely held out my hand for him to kiss, and then we gravely shook hands. I remained in a dreamy state for a good while. I shall miss this child, but he will write to me.

You know that for the last few days Paris has gone crazy about little pigs. They are called *porte-veine*, and are made in gold, in enamel, in precious stones, and in everything else. I have been wearing a copper one for two days. They say at the studio that, thanks to the pig, I have done a good piece of painting. Well, poor Casimir has taken away a little pig in remembrance of me.

I have a good mind to give him the Gospel of Saint Matthew, with this dedication:—"The most beautiful book in the world, and one which responds to every feeling of the soul. There is no need to be sentimental or bigoted in order to find calm and consolation in it. Keep it as you would a talisman,

and read a page of it every evening in remembrance of me, who have perhaps given you pain, and you will understand why it is the best book in the world."

But does he deserve it? And is it not better to confine myself to the little pig. In the first place, he will not understand Saint Matthew.

Sunday, June 20th.—I spent the morning at the Salon, which closes to-night. The *Good Samaritan* has gained the medal of honour. But however extraordinary M. Morot's painting may be, the medal of honour ought not to be so easily won. And it is not given to merit, but to the *best picture in the Salon.*

Bastien Lepage's landscape is not perfect, it spoils the figure. But what an admirable figure! This head is quite an extraordinary piece of work. Morot's picture almost bored me to-day, while that of Bastien Lepage! I went from one to the other, and then to a sleeping head by Henner, and a little nymph by the same artist. Henner is beauty itself. It is not altogether nature, but . . . . but it ought to be nature, it's adorable. His nymphs in the twilight are incomparable and inimitable. He never varies, but is always charming. His nude figures at the Luxembourg do not come up to what he does now. His last year's picture I consider his best. I wished intensely to buy it, I should look at it every day. Oh, if I were rich! . . . .

S—— shall not have his Saint Matthew.

It is singular what an effect Morot's picture has had on me. It is dull after Bastien Lepage and Henner. Henner's is inexpressibly charming.

Sunday, June 27th.—I did some modelling this morning. I feel as depressed as possible, but I must appear to be gay, and this suppressed misery makes me stupid. I have not a word to say. I force myself to laugh, listening to

commonplace talk, and feel inclined to cry. Misery of miseries!

Outside of my art, which I commenced from caprice and ambition, which I continued out of vanity, and which I now worship; outside of this passion—for it is a passion—there is nothing, or only the most atrocious existence. Ah! misery of miseries. And still there are some happy people in the world. Happy! that is too much to ask; a bearable existence would satisfy me; with what I possess it would be happiness.

Wednesday, June 30th.—Instead of painting, I take Miss Graham with me and we go to the Rue de Sèvres, and remain for about an hour opposite the houses of the Jesuits. But it was nine o'clock, and we only saw the end of the agitation.

I consider this expulsion absurd, and can only account for it as a mean revenge of M. Jules Ferry for his article No. 7. The influence of the Jesuits has just been considerably strengthened; if people hate their doctrines, they ought not to go to work in this way . . . and it is so difficult to know how to act, that it is better to let it alone.

There is only a fanciful way that would be applicable —to give all sorts of guarantees, to make all possible advances to every living Jesuit, to give them an estate, to build them houses, to create a city for them, and when they are all in it, to blow it up. I do not dislike the Jesuits so much as I fear them, in my ignorance of what they really are. Does any person know *for certain* what they are?

No! But it would be difficult to do anything more stupid and less useful than this *dispersion.* Why does Gambetta allow it? I thought for a moment that he permitted it in order to intervene triumphantly.

Wednesday, July 14th.—Anniversary of the taking of the

Bastile. Review, distribution of flags, illuminations, and balls in every public square. Paris has a look of charming newness. At six o'clock we take the circular train at the Porte Maillot. I put on a pink dress which cost me twenty-five francs at the Magasin du Printemps.

Observe that we are on our way to see the illuminations, and riots at Belleville. We talk and laugh so much that we miss our station, and have to change trains three times. The worst of all was that the places looked quite deserted. At last we alight in the open desert; it is eight o'clock, and we begin to feel hungry. Gaillard suggests dining at the Lac Saint Fargeau; delicious shade, a lake, good cookery, &c. &c. Agreed. We then go on a voyage of discovery, and enter a park, the Buttes Chaumont. We are desperately hungry; but console ourselves by finding the scenery superb, especially a certain pavilion that looks like a temple. Julian stops nearly every one who passes, and asks for information respecting the restaurant; all give different directions. At last, after having walked and admired the paving-stones as a consolation, we catch sight of a lake and an illuminated restaurant. This is splendid! We rush there, but, after ten minutes' walk, we find our passage barred. We must retrace our steps and go round by another way. It was vexing; the future Mme. Gaillard was dying with hunger. And each time that we jokingly foretold some misadventure, it was sure to happen. The lake was not Saint Fargeau, and the restaurant was a simple café, where we found nothing to eat.

"Go down to La Villette," said one.

"If you would like to eat something standing," said a groggy citizen, "you had better go in there," and he pointed to a wine shop.

Oh! joy! A cab comes our way—but refuses to take us, and it is only after urgent entreaties and supplications that he consents. We all five cram in and start for the Lac Saint

Fargeau. I will not describe to you this whole hour's drive through a number of little streets, almost deserted. We arrive; the Lac Saint Fargeau is not a lake at all, but a hideous pool. It is half-past nine; and we are scarcely seated when it begins to rain. We have to move to an immense assembly room. I jump on to a chair.

"Gentlemen, I am an opportunist before everything; now, as at this moment it is opportune to eat, I propose that we take our seats once more."

At about ten o'clock we begin to think of the fireworks which we meant to have witnessed from the top of the Buttes Chaumont. We meet our angelic coachman again at the door of the restaurant; he is tipsy, but shows proof of an ambassador's talents in difficult passages. And, indeed, cries of—

"Down with the carriages!" are to be heard: but we reply by "Vive la République!"

Friday, July 16th.—Julian considers my painting very, very good, and A—— is obliged to admit that it is not bad, for Julian is more severe than Tony.

I am crazy about Julian's praises.

We go away to-morrow, and I am enduring the boredom of being on the eve of a journey—parcels, &c., &c. It is fortunate that I am going away, for otherwise the studio would not continue to get on so well. I am at present its undisputed chief. I give advice, I entertain, my work excites great enthusiasm: I have a kind of coquetry in being kind, gracious, and obliging, and making myself loved—loving my companions, consoling them with fruits or ices.

The other day I went out, and they at once commenced praising me. Mlle. Marie D—— was quite overpowered when relating it, and Madeleine, who draws, as you know, wishes to begin painting, and places herself

under my wing for advice. It is true I teach to perfection, and if I painted as well as I teach I should be very well satisfied.

"In fact, that is what always comes of being an astounding professor."

Julian regrets that I cannot go on with that head, which would do for the Exhibition. "It shows character and looks natural—it is bold and life-like."

My little model has an uncommon head—very large eyes, enormous eyelids, an enormous superciliary arch, with a slight expression of astonishment, a turned-up nose, a pretty mouth, a charming complexion. She is young, but there is about her a sort of blemished look, not, however, displeasing; golden hair, which I believe to be dyed, but, nevertheless, beautifully arranged like a lion's mane, on a dark green background.

Saturday, July 17th.—I wanted to go to the country—real country, where there would be no one; but even that is not enough. Real happiness would consist in retiring now and then to uninhabited countries—to islands amongst great foreign trees, with Paul and Virginia. To see the sunrise, and enjoy the night all alone in the most absolute calm! A savage country, tall trees, a pure sky, mountains gilded by the sun . . . an atmosphere which one cannot imagine, and which in itself is a felicity, instead of the horrors we breathe here. . . But for such an existence one must have money. And I should not even care to have a man I loved to share my solitude.

Mont Dore.—Tuesday, July 20th.—I went to Julian's with Villevieille to fetch my keys, which I forgot yesterday. He encourages me very much—I leave with a good impression. It is a relief that I have no longer the fear of Breslau. In speaking of me Julian says: "In her case it is not

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simply painting, it is the life itself; and when she is unsuccessful you can still see that her effort is in that direction."

Afterwards we go again to look at the Prix de Rome. At four o'clock Villevielle comes back to say "Good-bye" again, and we start. On Monday, at six o'clock in the morning, we arrive at Clermont, and at three o'clock at Mont Dore. It takes six hours to drive from Clermont to that frightful Mont Dore, but I like that better than the train.

We get bad lodgings, as every place is full. The cookery is atrocious. I am only to-day getting resigned to it, chiefly because I have discovered some interesting things to paint.

Wednesday, July 21st.—I have commenced my treatment. You are fetched in a closed Sedan chair. A costume of white flannel—drawers and stockings in one—and a hood and cloak! Then follow a bath, a douche, drinking the waters, and inhaling in succession. I accept everything. This is the last time that I mean to take care of myself, and I shouldn't do it now but for the fear of becoming deaf. My deafness is much better—nearly gone.

Thursday, July 22nd.—I admit the elevation of a man to supreme power when that man is a hero like Napoleon I. I also admit that a sort of dictatorship may be conferred on a superior and capable being; but his children are of no account. I do not approve even of power for life. That looks as though one were afraid of failing in one's engagements on both sides. If the man who is elected conducts himself properly, he needs no oaths of fidelity to maintain him in power.

I am wearing a hat like those of the peasant women here;

it suits me very well, and makes me look like a Greuze. I telegraphed for some lawn dresses to wear here in the heat, and now it is cold. I am beginning to look at the scenery. Until this evening, I have been depressed by the filthiness of the food, and because eating becomes here an ignoble preoccupation, from which one can get no exemption.

Friday, July 23rd.—Who will give me back my wasted, spoiled, and lost youth? I am not yet twenty, and the other day I found three grey hairs. I boast of it, it is a fearful proof that I exaggerate nothing. Were it not for my childish face I should look old. Is it natural at my age?

Oh! but there arises at the bottom of my heart such a storm, that it is better to cut all this short by telling myself that I shall always have the resource of blowing my brains out before they begin to pity me.

I had an extraordinary voice; it was a gift of God, and I lost it. Singing is to a woman what eloquence is to a man, a power without limits.

From my window which looks on to the park I saw Mme. de Rothschild in the Promenade; she has arrived here with grooms, horses, &c. &c. The sight of this fortunate being vexed me, but I must be brave. Besides, when a pain becomes intense, it means deliverance. When it reaches a certain point we know that it can only diminish. It is while waiting for this crisis of the heart and soul that we suffer, but when once that crisis has come, we feel relieved. And then we call Epictetus to our aid, or we pray; but prayer softens. . . .

Now I am better for a few days, during which bitterness will keep rising, rising, rising; then will come a fresh outburst, then I shall collapse, and so on!

Tuesday, July 27th.—I try to paint landscape, but it ends by my kicking a hole through the canvas, and then there was

a little girl of four beside me, watching me do it; so instead of looking at my landscape, I was looking at the child, who is to be my model from to-morrow. How can one prefer anything else to the human face?

I have such a pain between my neck and my left ear, right inside, that it is enough to drive me mad. I do not say anything about it, for my aunt would worry me, and I know it has something to do with my sore throat.

For more than twenty-four hours I have been suffering terribly; I cannot sleep, or do anything else. Even my reading is interrupted every second. I think it is this pain which makes me see the dark side of life. Misery of miseries!

Thursday, July 29th.—I find no end of models; all these people of Auvergne are wonderfully good-natured, and the women are most flattering.

I commence a picture of a little girl of ten lying asleep in the grass. But to-morrow I leave her to paint a little fellow with his goat (life size), which I will finish, and then I will go on with my little girl. The little boy with the goat is the son of a wood-carver and carpenter, who has drawn in the studios at Paris. His wife is a dressmaker, and the three children are beautiful. Besides this, their shop faces the north, and on rainy days I will make a very dark study of the shop, in which I will place the little girl, who is not more than seven, and charming.

Saturday, July 31st.—Yesterday I commenced my picture on a 25 canvas. The arrangement is very simple The two children are sitting under beautiful trees, the trunks of which are covered with moss; there is an open space at the top of the picture through which the country is seen in pale green. The boy, who is about ten, is sitting full face, with a school-book under his left arm, and his eyes looking at nothing. The little girl, who is six, is

pulling him by the shoulder with one hand, and in the other she is holding a pear. Her face is in profile, and she seems to be calling him. The two children are seen only down to the knees, for the scale is life-size.

Before leaving Paris I read *Indiana*, by Georges Sand and I assure you that it is not entertaining! But as I have only read *La Petite Fadette*, two or three other novels, and *Indiana*, perhaps I ought not to give an opinion. . . . . So far I am not at all captivated by her talent; but still, for all the world to have admired so loudly. . . . . However, I do not like it. It is the same with Raphael's Virgins; what I see at the Louvre does not please me. I saw Italy before I was able to judge, and what I saw then equally displeased me. It is neither divine nor earthly, to me it seems conventional and cardboardy.

I wanted to ride on horseback . . . . but I care for nothing, and, when I spend a day without working, I feel a dreadful remorse: and some days I can do nothing, and then I tell myself that I could if I would, so I quarrel with myself, and it ends up with a *Let it all go! Life is not worth living!* during which I smoke and read novels.

Tuesday, August 17th.—My open-air picture is abandoned, because of the bad weather. I have painted another from it on canvas, No. 15. The scene is in the carpenter's house on the left side, the woman is trying a choir dress on a boy of ten; the little girl is seated on an old box, looking at her brother with open mouth; the grandmother is near the stove in the background, her hands joined, and smiling as she looks at the child. The father, sitting near the bench, is reading *La Lanterne* and looking askance at the red cassock and white surplice. The background is very complicated; a stove, some old bottles, tools, and a heap of things rather unfinished, naturally.

I have not time to finish it, but I painted this picture to familiarise myself with these things. Standing figures, floors, and other details frightened me, and I should have felt desperate at risking a picture of an interior; now I know how to do it, not that I can do it well, but I am no longer afraid of it, that is all.

The heads in my first sketch are about three fingers in height.

There were the dresses and all to be done, and I had never before done anything but the nude, excepting in my contemptible Salon picture. And there were hands! six hands and a half.

I have never had the perseverance to complete any writing satisfactorily. The event happens, I get the idea, I write out a rough copy, and the next day I see in the papers an article which is like mine, and therefore makes mine of no use, which, to begin with, I had never completed, nor written out properly. Perseverance in art shows me that a certain effort is necessary in order to vanquish the first difficulty. The first step is all the difficulty.

This proverb has never struck me so forcibly.

Then, furthermore, and above all these, is the consideration of one's surroundings. In spite of the best will in the world, mine must be called brutalising. The members of my family are, for the most part, ignorant and commonplace. Then there is Mme. G——, a thoroughly worldly woman. Then there are the people who call on us; we rarely talk, and you know our *habitués*, La M——, &c., some insipid young men. I assure you, too, that if I did not shut myself up so often by myself with my books, I should really be less intelligent than I am as it is. I seem to speak my mind freely, and occasionally no one has more difficulty in showing off. I often become quite imbecile, the words crowd my mouth and I cannot speak. I listen and smile vaguely, that is all.

Wednesday, August 18th.—We have been riding too long; five hours on horseback, with this weakening treatment, have completely knocked me up.

I am afraid the treatment will justify that brute of a doctor at the baths, who asserted that I was weak. . . . . It is true that when I had finished, he assured me that to have stood twenty-one baths so well I must be very strong. Medicine is a wretched science.

We climbed to the top of the Sancy; the mountains which encircle that horrible Mont Dore look flat from this eminence. The view from the top of the Sancy is really grand; I should like to see the sun rise from that height. The distances have a bluish tinge, which reminded me of the Mediterranean, and this is all that is beautiful in it. The ascent on foot is very difficult; but when you have reached the top you seem to overlook the whole world.

There was a crowd of people, come like ourselves, and they spoiled nature.

Thursday, August 19th.—I am good for nothing this morning; my eyes and head are tired. And to think I am not going before Saturday!

To-day I have no time; to-morrow will be Friday, and if I started on a Friday I should be thinking that all the annoyances which happen to me were due to that fact.

Paris, Sunday, August 22nd.—Eight o'clock. How pretty and comfortable my study looks!

I have read the weekly illustrated papers and other pamphlets . . . . I am quite settled now, and I feel as though I had not been away at all.

Two o'clock in the afternoon. I comfort myself (?) with the thought that my worries are only equivalent to those of all kinds which artists have to endure; for I have not to contend with poverty and the tyranny of parents . . . . For that is

what artists complain of, is it not? Talent alone will not make me succeed, unless it be . . . . a stroke of genius; but such strokes have never been effected even by a great genius after three years' study, especially now when there is so much talent about. I have very good intentions, and then suddenly I do foolish things just as in a dream . . . . I despise and hate myself, as I despise and hate every one else, including my own people. . . . . Oh! my family . . . . For example, in the railway carriage my aunt tried all manner of little dodges to make me sit on the side with the window closed. Tired of struggling, I gave in, but on condition that the other should remain open; but as soon as I fell asleep she shut that one too. I woke up declaring that I would kick my heels through the panes, but we were at our destination. And here, at breakfast, I saw looks of agony, and eyebrows contracted in dramatic fashion because I did not eat. Evidently these people love me . . . . but yet it seems to me that when people love they ought to understand you better! . . . .

Sincere indignation produces eloquence. A man who is indignant, or who believes himself to be indignant against a Government, mounts the platform and makes himself a reputation. But a woman has no platform at her disposal; besides which she is beset by fathers, fathers-in-law, mothers, mothers-in-law, everybody, &c. &c., who fidget her all day long. She grows indignant, but can only be eloquent before her dressing table; result, zero.

And then mamma is always talking of God: if God is willing; by God's help. They call upon God so often only to escape all sorts of little duties. It is neither faith nor even devotion, it is a mania, a weakness; the cowardice of lazy, incapable, and indolent people! What can be more indelicate than to cover all one's failings with the word of God? It is indelicate; it is more, it is criminal, if one believes in God. If it is decreed that a thing is to happen, it will happen, she

says, to avoid the trouble of action . . . . and the fear of remorse. If everything had been decreed beforehand, God would be only a constitutional president, and our wills, vices, and virtues but sinecures.

Thursday, September 2nd.—"Besides that, he read a great deal, acquiring that profound and serious instruction which one owes to oneself alone, and which every person of talent has sought for between the ages of twenty and thirty." This remark *from Balzac* flatters me.

But see now! I have hired a garden at Passy, Rue du Ranelagh, No. 45, for making studies in the open air, and I begin with Irma, a nude figure, life size, under a tree.

It is still pretty warm, and I must make haste. Such is life! After all, it is just as well. I do not know how it is that I feel, as it were, apprehensions of I know not what. I feel as if some annoyances were about to happen to me. Shut up alone, and at work, I should think myself safe. . . . But people are so stupid and spiteful, that they come and seek you out in your corner to worry you.

But what can happen? I don't know; maybe something will be invented or misrepresented; it will be repeated to me and pain me. . . .

Or else some nasty thing will occur . . . . not important, but petty and humiliating; like my luck, in fact. All this keeps me from Biarritz.

"Why do you not go?" said Mme. G——. "You must go; I will tell your mother or your aunt about you. . . . In fact, you shall go to Biarritz; it is very elegant; you will meet plenty of people there."

Bosh! as they say in the fashionable world. If they would only let me alone, I should like to remain in my garden at Passy.

Tuesday, September 7th.—It is raining. . . . All the most disagreeable incidents of my life crowd through my brain, and there are some things already long past, which make me start and contract my hands just as though I felt a sudden twinge of physical pain.

It would be necessary for my recovery that everything about me should be changed. . . . I dislike my own family. I know beforehand what my mother or my aunt will say, or what they will do in every circumstance; how they look at the Salon, on the promenade, at the seaside, and it all sets my teeth on edge. . . . . it is like hearing glass being scraped.

All around me would have to be changed, and when I felt calmer I should, no doubt, love them all as they ought to be loved. But they let me die of *ennui*, and when I refuse a certain dish they look scared. . . . Or else they practise tricks without number to excuse there being no ice at table, in case it might hurt me. Or else they come like thieves to shut windows that I have opened. A thousand small exasperating nothings; but home is altogether oppressive.

My anxiety is that I am getting rusty in this solitude. All these black moods darken the intellect, and make me retire into myself. I fear that these dark clouds may leave a veil over my character for ever, and make me bitter, soured, and gloomy. I have no wish to be so, but am afraid of it, by dint of eating my heart out in silence.

It is said that my manners are perfect; the old Bonapartists said so to Adeline. . . . No, look you, it seems to me that there will always be a sort of uneasiness weighing upon me. I am always in fear of being slandered, humiliated, and put on the black list. . . . . and some of it must stick, whatever people may say. . . . No, look you, my family can have no idea what they have made of me. My sadness frightens

me only because I am afraid of losing for ever the brilliant qualities indispensable to a woman. . . .

Why do I live? Of what use am I here? What have I obtained? Neither glory nor happiness, nor even peace! . . .

Friday, September 10*th.*—Great perturbation for my aunt. Doctor Fauvel, who sounded me a week ago and found nothing the matter, has sounded me to-day and found that my bronchial tubes are attacked; his look became . . . grave, affected, and a little confused at not having foreseen the seriousness of the evil; then followed some of the prescriptions for consumptive persons, cod-liver oil, painting with iodine, hot milk, flannel, &c. &c., and at last he advises going to see Dr. Sée or Dr. Potain, or else to bring them to his house for a consultation. You may imagine what my aunt's face was like! I am simply amused! I have suspected something for a long time; I have been coughing all the winter, and I cough and choke still.

Besides, the wonder would be if I had nothing the matter; I should be satisfied to have something serious and be done with it.

My aunt is dismayed, and I am triumphant. Death does not frighten me; I should not dare to kill myself, but I should like to be done with it. . . . If you only knew! . . . . I will not wear flannel nor stain myself with iodine; I am not anxious to get better. I shall have, without that, quite enough health and life for all I shall be able to do in it.

Friday, September 17*th.*—Yesterday I went again to the doctor to whom I went about my ears, and he admitted that he did not expect to see matters so serious, and that I should never hear so well as formerly. I felt as if struck dead. It is horrible! I am not deaf certainly, but I hear as one sees through a thin veil. For instance, I

cannot hear the tick of my alarm-clock, and I may perhaps never hear it again without going close up to it. It is indeed a misfortune. Sometimes in conversation many things escape my hearing. . . . Well, let us thank heaven for not being blind or dumb as yet.

I am quite bent as I write, and if I try to sit up, it hurts me terribly; it is in this case the effect of tears. At the death of the Prince Imperial I felt just the same. I have been crying very much since this morning.

Tuesday, September 28th.—A good day commenced in the night. I dreamt of *him.* He was ugly and ill, but that does not matter. I understand now that it is not for beauty one loves. We were talking like two friends, as of yore; and as we should talk again if we were to meet. I only wished one thing, that our friendship might remain within limits that would permit it to last.

It was also my dream when waking. In short, I have never felt so happy as I did this night.

Saint-Amand comes to luncheon. An avalanche of compliments: I am this and that; and this winter they mean to form a circle of the élite around me; he means to bring the celebrities, all the *somebodies,* &c. &c.; I did not even wish for this, and I woke up laughing.

Dumas fils says that young girls do not love, but simply have a *preference,* for they do not know what *love* is. Then where the devil *does* M. Dumas place love?

And then one pretty nearly always knows enough to have some notion . . . . And what M. Dumas calls *love* is merely the consequence and natural complement of love, and not at all a thing by itself separate and complete—at least, for people who are somewhat decent.

"Often the inevitable consequence, and without which no love is possible," says the same Dumas, and he also

calls it "the last expression of love." That I admit; but to say that a young girl cannot love is nonsense.

I know nothing about it, myself, but yet I feel that there is something repulsive in it, with a being one dislikes, and that it contains "the last expression of love" is when one loves.

There are also wild fancies which sometimes cross the mind, you know what I mean. . . . . when the man is not repulsive; but they have nothing to do with love. What would horrify me most would be to kiss on the lips one to whom I felt indifferent; I think I could never do it.

But when one loves, oh! . . . that is so different. For instance, last night I loved in my dream; sometimes it has happened to me when awake. Well, it is so pure, so tender, and so beautiful. Love is so grand and pure a sentiment that everything in it is chaste.

M. Dumas' *love* is not objective, but is only a consequence of what is felt, and a means of loving more and better what one loves already.

Wednesday, September 29th.—Since yesterday I have looked so fair and fresh and pretty that I am surprised, with animated and brilliant eyes; even the outline of my face looks more delicate and beautiful. Only it is a pity it should happen just when there is no one to see me. It is absurd to say, but I looked at myself in the glass with pleasure for half-an-hour; it is a long time since this has happened to me . . . .

Friday, October 1st.—The Russian people who have come to see us tell me the news of Russia. Their eldest daughter is under the strict supervision of the police for having said, on an examination day when the Grand Duke was expected, that she would much rather pass her examination

than receive the visit of the Grand Duke. On another occasion, being very short-sighted, she wore a pince-nez, thanks to which she has been denounced to the police! spectacles or eye-glasses being considered signs of advanced ideas amongst women. They transport, poison, or exile for a word. They pay domiciliary visits at night, and if you are not very dangerous they send you to Viatka or Perm; if you are, to Siberia or the gallows. It is said that there is not a family without one member in exile, hanged, or at least under supervision. The spy system is so thoroughly organised that it is impossible to talk in one's own home, in one's family circle, without everything being reported to someone in authority. Poor country! and the other day I was accusing myself of cowardice because I would not go there! but is it possible? The Socialists are atrocious villains, who murder and rob you; the government is arbitrary and stupid. These two fearful elements are at war with each other, and the wise people are crushed between the two. The girl informed me, after two hours' talking, that for the tenth part of what I said I should be sent to penal servitude or hanged, and that if I go to Russia I am done for.

I will go to Russia when there is some respect for people's rights in that beautiful country, when it has become possible to be useful there, and when one will not risk exile by remarking that "the censorship is very severe."

All this makes one's heart jump. Would it not be possible to form an honest Liberal party, for I hate the crimes of Socialism as much as those of the Government? Ah! if it were not for my painting, how I. . .

Oh! Frenchmen, who say that you are neither happy nor free! . . . There is that going on in Russia which happened in France in the Reign of Terror; for a movement or a word you are lost. Oh! what a great deal

there is to be done before men will be comparatively happy!

"We are now trying to liberate woman," says the younger Dumas; "when that is done, we must try to liberate God; and then when there will be perfect understanding between the three—God, man, and woman—we shall see clearer and advance faster."

The woman question is one of the most odious, and when one thinks that everything has made progress excepting this one feels stupefied. Read Dumas' pamphlet, *Les Femmes qui Votent et les Femmes qui Tuent.* Dumas' overpowering talents no longer shock me in these pages, though men are still rather too high and mighty towards women. But, on the whole, there is some good in it.

Saturday, October 2nd.—A lady whose portrait I am painting pays me for it by sitting for the study of a hand. Tony has been adorable; he was just going to correct the Jewess, when he caught sight of my hands. "Who did this?"

"I, Monsieur."

"It is very true, very true, very true;" and after having again looked at my study, he repeated, "It is very true, very true;" and again, after another pose, "It is very true." He looked agreeably surprised, and imagine my joy!

And he sat himself down in my seat, and gave me a lesson. "It is a good study, you must do some more like that. There is *charming tone in it;*" I underline because of my fellow-students, who, not knowing what to object to, said I was no colourist.

"Unfortunately, the drawing is not quite right, but that will not happen again in the next study, I am sure; it must be too long—that is a fault one does not repeat. On the whole, it is good, there is good work in it." Really! I turned red and pale over it. But you should see the

importance they attach to me at the studio. I am the most advanced, and I am made so much of that I speak almost with unction, like Cassagnac. But do not fear that this triumph will turn my head.

I am happy about my painting, and I am feeling better generally.

The hands are painted on a 6 canvas; the left one resting flat on the table, the right hand holding a pen, as if she had just stopped to read over what was written. I express myself badly, but you understand.

Sunday, October 3rd.—I am miserable. No, I am afraid there is nothing to be done. For four years I have been doctoring a laryngitis under the most celebrated physicians, and it goes from bad to worse.

For four days my ears were better, I could hear well; now it is beginning again.

Very well then, I am going to make a prophecy—

I am going to die, but not immediately. That would be too good, that would put an end to everything. But I am to drag out my existence with colds, coughs, fevers, and all sorts of things. . . .

Monday, October 4th.—I sent to my Naples professor for some mandoline music, and his reply has just come. I am keeping his letter because, though written by a simple man, its Italian phrasing is so charming. I must admit that, in spite of my *naturalistic* tendencies (an expression little understood), and my Republican sentiments, I am very sensitive to these elegances of language.

Moreover, why can't these things harmonise? But there, we must leave this style to the Italians, in others it is ridiculous. Oh, heavens! when shall I be able to go to Italy?

How dull everything else is after Italy! No person or

thing has ever caused me such delights as the remembrance of that country. Why cannot I go there at once? But my painting; am I advanced enough to go right without guidance? I don't know.

No, I will stay in Paris for this winter; I will go to Italy for the carnival, and I will spend the winter of 1881-82 at St. Petersburg; I will come back to Paris or to Italy from 1882 to 1883. And then I will marry a man of title, possessing a yearly income of fifteen or twenty thousand francs, who will be delighted to take me with my own income. Am I not truly wise to wait three years before capitulating?

Tuesday, October 5th.—You may be resigned—or, more correctly, pull yourself together—and, fathoming your inmost soul, ask if it matters so much to have lived in one way or in another. You may have conquered your feelings and say, with Epictetus, that you are free to accept evil for good—or, rather, to remain indifferent to what may happen.

You must have suffered horribly to consent to quit life by this species of death, and it is only after unheard of sufferings and complete despair that you begin to understand the possibility of such a living death. But, if you could only settle down to it, you would at least be at peace . . . . It would not be a vain dream; *it is a possibility.* But you'll say, Why live at all? Since you have come into the world of men, it is evident that it becomes useless to live on these terms. Indeed, it is only after thoroughly realising that real life is a cause of endless evils, that you accept the other, or that you hide yourself from the first in the second.

At a certain pitch of physical pain we lose consciousness, or fall into ecstasies; the same happens with moral sufferings which have reached a certain point. We soar we are

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astonished at having suffered, we despise everything, and we walk with head erect like martyrs.

What matter, after all, whether the fifty years I have to live are spent in a prison or in a palace, amid society or in solitude? The end is the same. The sensations contained between the beginning and the end, which leave no trace, that's what occupies us. Of what importance is a thing which does not last, and which leaves no trace? I can utilise my life by working; I shall have talent; perhaps that may leave some traces . . . after death.

Saturday, October 9th.—I have not done any work this week, and inaction makes me stupid. I have read over my journey to Russia, and it interested me much. In Russia I had partly read *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, and as it did not please me, I have just been reading it again; for, after all, Théophile Gautier is considered a man of enormous talent, and *Mademoiselle de Maupin* as a masterpiece, especially the preface. Well, I have read it over again to-day. The preface is very good, certainly; but the book? . . . . In spite of all its. . . . nudities, the book is not amusing, some pages of it are simply boring. I hear people exclaiming, "What about the language and the style?" &c. Ah! heavens! yes, it is in good French; it is the work of a man of ability in his trade, but it is not a sympathetic talent . . . By-and-by perhaps I may understand why it is a masterpiece. I do not mind admitting now that it is very good, but it is antipathetic, and that bores me. It is the same with George Sand . . . . another writer with whom I feel no sympathy; and George Sand possesses in less degree than Gautier, that vigour and boldness which make you respect, if not like, him. George Sand . . . . is all very well. Amongst modern writers I prefer Daudet; he writes novels, but they are sprinkled with just observations, with things that are *true*, and which have been. One lives in them.

As for Zola, we are estranged. He has taken to attacking Ranc and other Republicans in the *Figaro* with a persistency of bad taste which suits neither his great talents nor his high literary position.

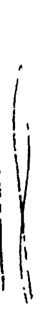
But what can we see in George Sand? A novel, elegantly written? Yes; but what more? Well, her novels bore me; while Balzac, the two Dumas, Zola, Daudet, and Musset, never do. Victor Hugo, in his most romantically crazy prose in *Han d'Islande*, is never fatiguing, you feel the genius of it; but George Sand! How can people read three hundred pages full of the doings and gestures of Valentine and Benedict, with an uncle, a gardener, and I know not what?

Always the levelling of society by the means of love, which is ignoble. That equality should be established would be admirable, but it must not be due to sexual caprices. The countess in love with her valet, and dissertations thereupon! That is George Sand's talent. Certainly, they are very beautiful novels, with beautiful descriptions of scenery. . . But I should like something more. . . I don't quite know how to put it. . . . One can't believe in that sort of thing. I always imagine that I am addressing superior beings, before whom I am afraid of talking pretentiously, whereas in general there are only ordinary and inferior people, who never appreciate modesty or an avowal of weakness. Well, I am reading *Valentine* at the present moment, and it sets my nerves on edge, for the book interests me just enough to make me finish it; and at the same time I feel that I gain nothing from it—only perhaps a vaguely disagreeable impression. This reading seems to lower me. I revolt against it, but I go on, for it would have to be as wearying as the *Dernier Amour*, by the same author, to keep me from reading it to the end. However, *Valentine* is the best work I have read of George Sand's. *Le Marquis de Villemer* is

good, too. I do not think there is any groom in love with the countess.

Sunday, October 10th. — Several visitors and Saint-Amand! We have some music, and he cries over *Paul and Virginia.* I can understand this irresistible emotion. I cried when I read that book, and the music at the opera makes me weep at the same places. The most sensational novels do not cause such a profound sadness. Ah! really I feel something like a wrench within me, and I burst into tears.

If these lines be read people will think I am joking, or that I have gone mad, for I am apparently so philosophical and critical.



I spent the morning at the Louvre, and I am amazed. Until now I never understood as this morning. I looked without seeing. It is like a revelation. I used to look and to admire politely, like the great majority of the universe. Ah! when one sees and feels art as I do, one has not an ordinary soul. To feel that it is beautiful, and to understand why it is beautiful—this is genuine happiness.

Monday, October 11th. — I begin to paint under the influence of yesterday's excitement. It is impossible not to acquire talent when you have such revelations as I had yesterday.

Tuesday, October 12th.—Yesterday I received the following telegram from Poltava:—"All the nobility present to you, through us, their congratulations on the occasion of your father's unanimous election. We drink your health.—Abaza—Manderstern."

Abaza is the one I knew in Russia—the greatest big-

wig in Poltava, after having been so at St. Petersburg and at Odessa.

Manderstern is the *Maréchal de la Noblesse* of the province, as my father that of the district of Poltava.

Here is my telegraphic reply. I must be polite, for family affairs are nobody's business: and further, it is a sort of . . . How shall I express it? It sounds official, nay, pompous:—

"Flattered by the gracious attention, I cordially thank the worthy representatives of the nobility of Poltava, to whom I wish a thousand prosperities.—MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

This is dignified and noble, it is like the telegram of a great man, and then it is not in a telegraphic style, with all the adverbs, &c., left out. Poor child, I pity you!

I read *Paul and Virginia* again very attentively, and I willingly excuse the somewhat strained *naïvetés* of style in the descriptions of the virtues of these good people. But I have just been having a good cry.

You remember when Paul comes back from the neighbours and calls from a distance to Marie, the negress, "Where is Virginia?" Marie turns her head towards him and begins to cry; and I do so too.

Yes, it's atrocious really for this poor young fellow to come back and not to find her. Then he runs to the rock and sees the ship, which is now only a black speck. . . . Here you feel mad for him.

And I cry, and cry again. And when Paul says to the dog running before him, "There, you will never find her again!" it is more than I can endure. And Virginia's letter, in which she sends Paul some violet seeds. Ah! but the awful moment is when she has gone, and he is looking at the black speck on the horizon from the top of the rock.

Bernardin de Saint Pierre did not himself understand what

he wrote. It is a passage sublime in its simplicity, and of incomparable emotion.

Friday, October 15th.—I have taken up again a portrait of one of Julian's pupils, which I painted before this summer. Not the one with the yellow hair, but another—an exquisite creature. Brown hair shot with red, a freshness, and a life! A lovely complexion, but disposed to become pimply; adorable brown eyes, a divine mouth; with something common, however, when seen full face—I am taking her in profile. Her neck and arms are magnificent in colour and form. She is twenty-five, and a widow, with a little boy of five and a half. If that woman were a model I should take her by the year.

And she has lovely hands, too, and also a lovely skin. It is impossible to render the extraordinary brilliancy of her face. I have already an idea for the Salon with her. I am giving her her portrait, and she has well earned it, for she sits like an angel. I dressed her Greuze fashion, in a bodice of cream damask, and a handkerchief of Indian muslin.

I shall never dare to ask her to sit for the Salon, it would be a matter of a month. If I could think of a way to pay her, but it is impossible. . . . I have already asked her in joke to sit for me, but seriously . . . . Ah! what a model. . . . Something splendid could be made of her.

In the same way as I made white fashionable three years ago, my crossed draperies and my sashes forming a point are being copied now. It is very aggravating.

Saturday, October 16th.—Amidst all sorts of nice things Tony said, "On the whole, I am very well satisfied; you are getting on well."

The lesson follows. I am very pleased every Saturday. I have fears, and then joys! . . .

That is because it is the only thing I care about.

seriously. My dazzling model, whose name is Mme. G——, is quite willing to sit for a picture, on condition that it is not too nude. I do not know what her position is, but I presume that she is not obliged to work for her living, for she comes to the studio to sit for me as much as I like for her portrait. But it does not matter, she is really very nice.

She promised me her hands and arms in exchange for her son's head, but to sit for a whole picture! Just think, it is the work of six weeks perhaps. She is fresh, young, and brilliant, with an indescribably touching and maternal look in her face. I shall make her a handsome present.

Tuesday, October 19th.—Alas! it must all end in dying miserably and slowly in a few years.

Well, I suspected that it would end so. Impossible to live with a brain like mine, for I am like those children who are too forward.

I wanted too many things to be happy, and circumstances have so arranged themselves as to deprive me of everything excepting physical comforts.

Two or three years ago, and even six months ago, whenever I went to a new doctor to get back my voice, he used to ask me if I did not feel such and such a symptom, and as I answered "No," he said, as nearly as possible, "There is nothing the matter with the bronchial tubes, nor with the lungs; it is only the larynx." Now, I am beginning to feel all those symptoms that the doctor commenced by supposing. Therefore the bronchial tubes and the lungs must be affected. Oh! but this is nothing, or almost nothing. Fauvel has ordered iodine and a blister; I naturally screamed with horror, I would rather have my arm broken than endure a mustard plaster. Three years ago in Germany, a doctor at the baths found out something the matter with my right lung under the shoulder-

blade. I laughed at it very much. Then again at Nice, five years ago, I sometimes felt a sort of pain in that place; but then I felt certain that I was getting a hump, as I had two humpbacked aunts, my father's sisters. And again, a few months back, I was asked if I did not feel anything there, and, without thinking, I answered "No." But now when I cough, or even take a long breath, I feel the pain there on the right side in my back. All these things together make me think that there is perhaps something really the matter . . . . I take a sort of pride in pointing out that I am ill, but I do not like it at all. It is a horrible death, very slow, four, five, ten years perhaps. And one gets so thin, so ugly.

I have not got much thinner, I am just as I ought to be; but I have a tired look, and I cough a great deal; my breathing, too, is difficult. Just think of it! For four years I have been under the care of the most celebrated doctors; have been taken to the baths, and not only have I not recovered my beautiful voice—so beautiful that I cry when I think of it—but I become worse and worse, and, out with the horrid word, slightly deaf!

If death would but come quickly I should not complain.

Has it ever happened to you to be about to express in words or in writing, that you no longer believe in something that you have hitherto believed in; and at the very moment you were saying, "And to think that I believed it!"—to be re-captivated by your first idea and to believe in it again, or at least to entertain grave doubts about the new one? This is my mood in making a sketch for my new picture. . . . . While waiting for the artist, the model, a little fair woman, is sitting astride on a chair smoking a cigarette, and looking at the skeleton, between the teeth of which she has stuffed a pipe. The clothes are scattered about on the floor on the left; on the right, the boots, a cigar-case open on the floor, and a little bunch of violets. One leg is thrown over the

cross bar of the back of the chair, the woman is leaning on her elbows with one hand under her chin. One stocking on the floor and the other still hanging from her foot. That is a very good arrangement as regards colour. By-the-bye I am getting to be a good colourist. Ah! I say that for fun; but, joking apart, I feel colour, and there is no comparison between my painting of two months ago, before Mont Dore and those of the present time.

You will see there will be no end of things to make me cling to life when I am good for nothing, when I am ill and disgusting.

Thursday, October 21st.—I showed Julian the picture I painted at Mont Dore. Of course, he bullied me, saying, nevertheless, that certain modern artists would consider it very good; that it is a mixture of Bastien-Lepage and of Bouvin; that a touch more of work would make it almost a good picture; that there are some entertaining points about it; that in spite of all it is an entertaining picture, but that I paint "like a hangman." About the sketch of the young woman suckling her child, he simply remarked that a *mother* does not suckle with her bust quite bare. I had composed this in a subdued key of colour. The woman is sitting in a low chair of yellow plush, with her legs stretched out and her feet bare; one foot rests on a stool, the face is in profile, the bust three-quarters. The child is sucking and at the same time pushing the breast with its little hand. The background is formed by the bed-curtain; and further back, in the shade, is seen a palm in a blue china vase. It is very subdued, but one shoulder at least ought to be covered.

As to the sketch of the model opposite the skeleton, that touched him to the heart. He said that it was just the thing," that "it was vulgar, disgusting," and I added, "Yes, disgusting, and that is why it is the thing; it is nature."

"But you cannot sign this. It would cause a scandal. But, sapristi, how natural! I do not mean to say that you will become this instant a celebrated painter, but you will certainly gain notoriety for this . . . . drollery of invention. . . . It is a picture to make people scream, especially if it is known that it is by a woman—a young girl. It is the same with me; when I paint a picture people cover their faces."

Friday, October 22nd.—It is raining; it is cold, a sharp biting cold; it is dark. What is more, I feel like the weather, and cough incessantly.

Ah! what misery and what an atrocious existence! At half-past three it is no longer light enough to paint, and if I read at night my eyes are tired for painting in the morning. The few people whom I might see I avoid for fear of not hearing what they say. On some days I can hear very well, and not on others, and then it is a torment I cannot describe. . . But God will put an end to me. Besides, I am prepared to face all sorts of miseries on condition of seeing nobody. Every ring at the bell makes me shudder. This new and horrible misfortune makes me afraid of all that I wished for. Nevertheless, I am always very gay and very amusing to others. I laugh as much as Mlle. Samary, of the Théâtre Français, but it is more a habit than a mask; I shall always laugh. It is ended; not only do I think it is ended, but I wish it may be so. I can find no word to describe my dejection.

Sunday, October 24th.—I went to the Louvre. I always go there alone, knowing that I shall not meet any acquaintances there on Sunday morning. One only sees properly when alone. I am fascinated by the pictures of the last century, their grace is inimitable and exquisite. What a charming period! Do you think I was born for a laborious,

studious, or heroic life? I should like to give myself up to the most luxurious idleness wrapped in Watteau and Greuze gauzes, and in Rigaud brocades. It is an exquisite century, combining all the old witcheries with the comforts of English dressing-rooms, whereas before this time people hardly washed at all, or but very little; and that spoils for me all the fine adventures of olden times.

Monday, October 25th.—I am reading *Les Châtiments.* It is true, Hugo is a genius. Shall I say that some of his lyrical transports astonished, not to say, wearied me? No, I don't think so. It is beautiful, it is sublime, and in spite of the grand gesticulations, the perspirations, and the frights, &c., it is human, natural, and beautiful. But I like him above all in his touching simplicity. The last act of *Hernani,* when Doña Sol beseeches the old man . . . and the language of the grandmother whose child had received two bullets in its head!

Friday, October 29th.—Having read a passage in the Gospel extraordinarily in accordance with the thought that guided me, I have a return to my old fervour and faith in miracles, to Jesus Christ, and my impassioned prayers of old days. For some time I had been satisfied with one God, and my belief was very pure, very severe, and very simple; but here I am returning to a religion more familiar and more . . . consoling, more in touch with the fears, the miseries, and the meannesses of my nature.

The God-Man and the Virgin Mary seem to listen to you more than the real God. . .

Monday, November 1st.—Our studio is getting like the men's studio, that is to say we have the nude all day long, the same model in the same attitude, therefore you

can thoroughly study a large piece. I have been wanting this for two or three months, before that it would have been of no use, but now I am just ready for that sort of work. There are only eight of us; the other pupils, twenty-two in number, have moved into the new studio which Julian has arranged at 51, Rue Vivienne, and which is organised in the style of our old one.

Tuesday, November 2nd.—For about a week I have had my breakfast brought from the house to the studio. This is managed in a straw or cane apparatus such as soldiers have. It is much more sensible than running from the Rue Vivienne to the Champs Elysées and losing the hours when the light is finest. So I work from eight till twelve and from one to four o'clock

Wednesday, November 10th.—It is horrible to have worked incessantly for three years only to find out that one knows nothing.

Thursday, November 11th.—Tony came, and as I explained to him my discouragement, he tells me that this proves that I am not blind, and he advised me to take up my studies, and to go on working.

Well, it proves, any way, that I know more about it than I used to, for I now see clearly. But how sad! How much encouragement I shall need! I have made myself a brown cloak, with a monk's hood, for the studio, when I happen to be placed near the window, from which there is a very devil of a draught. So I have a monk's hood, which has always brought me ill luck. I cried so much under this ill-omened hood, that our good-natured Zilhardt, who had come to see if it was not for fun, was quite aghast at it. I want to paint a picture representing an expulsion of monks, so I went to the Capuchins of the Rue de la Santé, and the three

remaining fathers told me about the disaster, and showed me the scene of it. I offered hospitality to two fathers at Nice. I trust they will not avail themselves of my offer.

Sunday, November 14*th.*—I was to have gone to Versailles to see if the convent of the Capuchins would suit me, for it was there they showed the most resistance.

In the courtyard of the convent devotional chairs are placed, where, in spite of the rain, the faithful come to kneel before the sealed door of the chapel. Excited women crying out that there is neither property nor law. . . . Heavens! how mismanaged all this has been, and how the monks have profited by it!

Will not Gambetta prove to be the strong man?. . . . For some man must come forward. . . . The Bonapartist system, then? And what of principles, and the Republic? Oh! do not fear, I shall not change; indeed, this subject, and the equality of man and woman, are the only things to which I am sincerely attached. There are some things which overawe my common sense; they are rare, but, after all, when I am thoroughly convinced *myself,* nothing in the world makes me alter, and I even find it very difficult not to *proclaim* my convictions from the house-tops, so pleased and proud am I to have found it out *by myself,* and to believe in it *sincerely.*

Because for many things, for nearly everything, alas! I only care . . . . very superficially . . . . for the sake of talking, or so as not to be quite out of it, or for what it may bring me. So then, a man is wanted, or rather, men; those who are directing us here are ridiculous and stupid; it is humiliating to the Republic. Don't think that the devotional chairs in the rain have made too great an impression on me. . . . Even if it were sincere it would not overcome me.

The Church has lowered God, disfigured religion, or,

rather, has created, instead of the worship we owe to God, a complicated religion, full of charlatanism, which must be destroyed. The Capuchin father received us very ungraciously through his wicket, telling us that for any information we wanted, all we had to do was to inquire of the faithful. I made a slight sketch of the courtyard, but it does not please me better than the Rue de la Santé, and I will arrange it a little. But . . . . good heavens! that is all.

Tuesday, November 16th.—I fear I exaggerated the other day respecting the Church. I had pious remorse and was within an ace of getting out of bed to come and make the *amende honorable* here, for the Church is a means of making God known; the Church has done a great deal for morals; the Church has carried to the savages the name of God and civilisation. Without offence to God, I think they could have been civilised without Catholicism; but after all . . . the Church has been useful in the same way as the feudal system, and like it, it has had, or nearly had, its day. There are in Catholicism too many inadmissible and revolting things, without being, however, absolutely odious. The divine has been mixed with puerile legends. There are too many enlightened people nowadays for pious falsehoods to be respected. But it is a period of transition we are going through, and unfortunately the masses are not yet educated enough to avoid passing from vain superstitions to the contempt and denial of God.

There are some sincerely religious men, but are there any sincere Royalists? . . . unless . . . that . . . for there are some people who think that a monarchy is necessary for the prosperity of certain countries. Fancy! I never thought of it the other day when I was saying that one must have the soul of a valet to like monarchy.

Let us suppose that the monarchy, a constitutional one of course, makes the happiness of the people; well, the

most proud and noble man can adhere to it sincerely, and can even have a certain sincere attachment for the family which has represented his country for centuries. But between this and the servile attachment to a particular race there is a great difference!

But, as I said above, I hardly approve of a Monarchy, although I am prepared to admit that one may be *sincerely* attached to it, and believe in it from the *bottom of one's heart*, on the aforesaid conditions.

This is certainly not possible in France, nor is it possible to have a monarchy there which one could conscientiously prefer to the Republic. Is there even a single candidate who is not disgraced or dishonoured? M. de Chambord? The d'Orléans who inevitably followed him? But after all, the d'Orléans, who were patiently borne with for centuries, might become "that family which represents the country." of which I was speaking just now, and the meannesses which a court compels would be the sacrifice of one's personal pride that one would make to one's country. . . . Doubtless. But of what use is all this when there is a Republic which possesses all the good points of the constitutional monarchy, and none of its bad ones, which is the finest and noblest of governments?

There is really something revolting in the sovereign honours given to a dummy monarch, by a minister, or a statesman of genius, who, no matter what he may do, will always be the servant of a monarch who is a nothing, a fool, and possibly an imbecile.

Friday, November 19th.—I made my negress come to the studio, where she sang for an hour instead of giving me my lesson at home.

The gas is lighted, and fifteen women, with Julian at their head, take their places at the end of the studio, while Madame Ponce and her guitar mount on to the model's

table amid a salvo of applause. Do you think I am gay? Nonsense! . . .

Julian has abused my picture to the last degree. The drawing is bad, cold in feeling, not true in tone, and the effect badly conceived. After that, if I am not satisfied! But I comfort myself a little by thinking that I knew it was not good, and then it gives me less annoyance. Ah! if I had thought it good and he had said that to me. . . . But enough! I see what painting is, and what it means to paint from the nude life-size.

Ah! I had reckoned on painting to make my mark! Wait a bit, old lady!

I am afraid every minute of bursting into tears.

Saturday, November 27th.—The competition is over. I wished to be able to give my opinion in advance about it here, but I really can't. I do not like what I have done: I have got sand in my eyes, and it was dark on the days when I painted my largest portions. I have been in full swing only to-day, so I have re-painted the head entirely, which looks the better for it. However, I don't like it; . . . but I must admit that it is the best.

I am not at all sure that my drawing is as good as I could make it, for though I judge myself always with impartiality, one is taken by surprise sometimes. When I received the medal I thought I had made a fright. . . . But one must not trust to that. . . . On the whole, I should like to have it—it would raise my spirits. And then it would prove that I had painted a head approved by Tony, Bouguereau, Lefebvre, and Boulanger. You know the medal is given only when it is deserved. If there is nothing to deserve it, the drawings are numbered, and that is all.

Wednesday, December 1st.—When I leave the studio, I

call for Mme. de D——, and we go to 12, Rue Cail, to Mlle. Hubertine Auclerc. It is a Wednesday! We had rung three times in vain, and had gone down again, and were conferring with the concierge, when a young woman came to the lodge. We had paused undecided. I *recognised* her at once.

The concierge calls us back, and Mlle. Auclerc invites us to go up. "*Droits des Femmes—siège social.*" These words, written on the door, had already given me—before the arrival of the young lady—a fit of enthusiasm as of old, and I pretended to hug Mme. de D——.

Very poor, simple, and bare is the office. She lights a fire, sits down in front of the fireplace, Mme. de D—— on her right hand, and myself on her left. My companion begins: then I said that I could not help feeling great emotion in the presence of the woman who has so courageously taken up the defence of our rights. Mme. de D—— is French, and the widow of an Englishman—Norskott. I am of foreign origin, but brought up in France, and am called Pauline Orelle. My secret aim is to paint Hubertine's portrait for the Salon. I adopt the pseudonym of Daria for my painting. Very pretty, very simple!—it is a Russian baptismal name. In fact, she will do well for a painting—dark, rather a blotched complexion, but the weather is cold, and has been so for some days. Small hands, rather red; small feet. Very nice appearance and language. She is sympathetic and amiable, her accent not very distinguished. She gives us a programme and a little pamphlet: we shake hands: we join them, promising to come again, and to pay our subscription of twenty-five francs per month, and attend the meetings.

"Next Wednesday at eight o'clock!"

I was friendly, and said to her that the principal argument of the Reactionists—the ugliness, age, and grotesque appearance of the ladies who attended the lectures—

do not apply in her case, as she was so young and pretty.

I am satisfied; no not yet, for it may turn out badly. Does not everything turn out badly? We shall see.

Sunday, December 5th.—Doctor Potain comes this morning and insists on my going to the South until March, or else I shall soon be unable to breathe, or to leave my bed. A nice thing; for five years I have been doing all that the celebrities have ordered, and I get worse and worse. I went so far as to lay hands on my beauty. I painted my right collar bone with iodine, and I feel no better. Is it possible that my continual worries can have injured my health? But still the larynx and the bronchiæ are not usually subject to moral affections. I can't tell. I do what they order me; I avoid running risks, washing only in warm water, and still I am ill. Villevielle told me yesterday that Tony, who came on Saturday to correct, had asked to see our competitive pictures, and thought my eyes were strangely drawn, but that there was something good in it, and some very beautiful points and charming tones. He is not pleased with the competition generally. If I do not get the medal, I shall have nevertheless done a fair study.

Wednesday, December 8th.—This evening the citizenesses Alexandrine Norskott and Pauline Orelle were present at the weekly meeting of the "Women's Rights" society which takes place in Hubertine's little drawing-room.

A lamp on the desk, at the left; on the right is the mantelpiece surmounted by a bust of the Republic; and in the centre with its back to the window, which itself is opposite the door, is a table covered with bundles of papers and boasting a candle, a bell, and a president, who looks very dirty and very stupid. At the president's left sits Hubertine, who looks down every time she speaks and rubs her hands

all the time. At his right, a violent and withered old female Socialist is screaming: "That if there is any fighting to be done, she will be the first to do it." There were about twenty queer old types, a sort of female concierges, just dismissed from their lodges, and a few men—what riff-raff you may imagine; some of those young fellows with long hair, worn in outrageous style, who cannot get a hearing in the cafés. I am wearing a very dark wig, and my eyebrows are blackened. The men ranted on socialism, collectivism, and the treacheries of the most advanced deputies. The red lady in the corner declared war against religion; whereupon Mme. de D—— (Norskott) protested, and made several remarks which went off like shots and did good. However, Hubertine is very wise, and understands that it is not a question of proletaires or of millionaires, but of woman in general, who is claiming her rights. These are the grounds on which they ought to take their stand; instead of which they discuss shades of political opinion.

Our names have been entered, we have voted, paid our subscriptions, &c. There!

Monday, December 13*th.*—I despise scandal-mongering, but I can't prevent it, and by this appearance of indifference I put my mind at rest . . . . and so many people speak evil that I have at last become accustomed to it. You know my life, you can judge me. I do not say this for you to praise my virtues, for my imprudences and my follies are enough to blacken me considerably. Well, it is done, let it pass. I accept the responsibility of it all the same, but allow me the extenuating circumstances.

Tuesday, December 21*st.*—I have no buzzing in my ears now, and hear very well.

Wednesday, December 22*nd.*—The medal is given to a

drawing from the Rue Vivienne, by a new pupil, an American girl. And I am first mentioned.

Thursday, December 23rd.—As it was getting late I left the portrait, and commenced to make a sketch, always with a view to the Salon. Julian comes in, and he thinks it very pretty, so I go with him into the ante-room, and ask him if that might do. Oh yes, very well; but it is a young lady's subject, and tame, and he thought I might find something more striking. And then he reproaches me, for the tenth time at least, for not having painted the portrait of Mme. N—— on a larger scale, and with more drapery, for the Exhibition in fact. I must tell you that he worries in this way every time I mention the Salon. But to make you understand what effect this has upon me, I must tell you that this portrait does not please or amuse me; that I am doing it out of good nature; that the model has nothing captivating; that I am doing it because I promised to in an expansive moment. This idiotic good nature would lead me to give away everything, and makes me rack my brain to think what I might suitably offer, and how I could best give pleasure to everybody. And do you think that this rarely happens? It is nearly always so, excepting when I am feeling too bored .... and even then ....

It is not even a quality; it is my nature to try to make everybody happy, and to burden myself with silly emotions! You did not know this, and I pass for a selfish person. Well, make it all fit in together.

So this portrait that I should like to finish soon is thrust under my nose every minute for this Exhibition, which has engrossed me for a year, about which I dream, and on which I base such fine hopes. It really seems that I am to be prevented from exhibiting anything; I say *it seems,* because it would be too cruel for me if you thought it might

be true. And again, always this tiresome portrait, which he says I should be wise to do at the studio, as I should do it better so.

Well, there goes my Salon picture.

This said, you will not be surprised that I reached home with my teeth clenched, and fearing to make a movement lest I might burst into tears and weep as I do now. Besides, I must have been mad to think that there was anything possible for me!

Oh void!

Now all is embittered, and the Salon question would make me shriek. Is this then what I have come to after three years' work?

"You must have a phenomenal success," said Julian.

But I have not been able. It is three years, and what have I done? What am I? Nothing. That is to say, I am a good pupil, and that is all; but the phenomenon, the thunder-clap, the flash? . . .

It comes upon me like a great unexpected disaster . . . . and the truth is so cruel, that I am already trying to think that I exaggerate. Painting has kept me back; as far as the drawing was concerned I "astonished" the masters; but I have been painting for two years. I am above the average, I know, I even show extraordinary aptitude, as Tony says; but I wanted something else. However, it isn't there; but I am broken down by it as by a great blow on the head, and I cannot think of it for a moment without feeling horribly bad. And oh! my tears!

Here is a way to improve one's eyes! I am lost, I am done for, dead, and what a fearful rage! I am heart-broken at myself. Oh, *mon Dieu!* . . .

I feel mad when I think that I may die in obscurity. I am too despairing for it not to happen.

Friday, December 24th.—Having had bad dreams, I go to

the studio, where Julian makes me the following offer: "Promise me that the picture shall be mine, and I will give you a subject which will bring you fame, or at least notoriety for six days after the opening of the Salon."

I naturally promise.

He makes the same proposal to A——, and after making us write and sign the agreement, with Magnan and Madeleine as witnesses, half laughing, half seriously, he takes us to his private room, and suggests to me that I should paint one corner of our studio, with three persons in the foreground, life-size, with others as accessories. And for A—— he suggests the whole of the studio at 53, Rue Vivienne, on a small scale.

He goes on pointing out to us the advantages of this subject for a good half hour, after which I go back to my portrait agitated and with a headache, and I can do nothing all day. The results of yesterday.

As for the subject, it does not fascinate me, but it may be very amusing; and then Julian is so taken with it, and so convinced. He quoted so many examples which had been successful. A woman's studio had never been painted. Besides, as it would be an advertisement for him, he would do all in the world to give me the wonderful notoriety he speaks about. A great thing like that is not easy. . . . But we shall see.

At half past three we go down with Villevielle, intending to go and look at the stalls on the boulevards, but having wished to glance at the master's new studio, we go in there. Villevielle, who plays like a virtuoso, sits down at the piano, and I compose doggerel verses for the master. At this moment he comes in, and we spend two hours with him and my aunt, who had come to fetch me. The studio is very pretty, quite close to the men's studio, on the *entresol.* A speaking-tube communicates with the ladies' third floor.

It was not bad fun; there was much talk about the picture. Julian would like it for several reasons: first of all, because he has not time to do it himself; secondly, to be civil to me; and thirdly, to tease Breslau, and to give a proof of my power to all those who will not believe in me. All this is very well, but I am beginning to suspect that he is offering me this thing so that I may get muddled with it, and not get anything done. It is stipulated that this picture is to belong to him, in whatever condition I leave it. I very amiably tell him my suspicions, and he answers that I do not believe a word of what I am saying.

Well, after all, our studio is small; there are only twelve of us, but that is enough to make it difficult for me, considering the size of my canvas; for really one cannot ask the pupils to remain motionless, and to sit to me for two months. I cannot see how I am to do it. I should like to paint something else, but what?

Sunday, December 26th.—Potain wants me to leave. I positively refuse, and then, half in fun, half in earnest, I complain of my family. I ask him whether crying and fuming every day can injure the throat. Without doubt . . . . I will not go away. Travelling is delightful, but not with my own family, with their little depressing worries. I know I should be in command, but they weary me and then— no, no, no!

Besides, I cough very little, but all this makes me miserable. I cannot see any way out of it! out of what? I do not know at all, and my tears choke me. Do not think they are the tears of a girl because she is unmarried; no, these are not like the others. After all . . . . it may be, though I think not.

And then, such sad things all round me, and no possibility of crying out. My poor aunt leads such a solitary life, we see so little of each other; I spend my evenings reading or playing.

I can neither speak nor write about myself lately without bursting into tears. I must be ill . . . . Ah! vain lamentations! Does not everything lead to death?

What is there in us, that in spite of plausible arguments, in spite of the consciousness that all leads to *nothing,* we should still grumble. I know that, like everyone else, I am going on towards death, and nothingness. I weigh the circumstances of life, and, whatever they may be, they appear to me miserably vain, and for all that I cannot resign myself! Then it must be a force, it must be a *something,* not merely "a passage," a certain period of time which matters little whether it is spent in a palace or in a cellar; there is then something stronger, truer than our foolish phrases about it all! It is life, in short, not merely a passage, an unprofitable misery; but life, all that we hold most dear, all that we can call ours, in short.

People say it is nothing, because we do not possess eternity. Ah, the fools! Life is ourselves, it is ours, it is all that we possess; how then is it possible to say that it is *nothing?* If this is *nothing,* show me *something!*

Thursday, December 30th.—I went to Tony's, and have come back slightly comforted. He very much wants me to paint this picture (*l'atelier*). I am quite capable of doing it life-size; he says it would be very amusing. A good study and picture at the same time. I must not be received by favour, but by merit; if it turns out badly he will tell me so; but he thinks I shall succeed fairly well, and prevails upon me to do it. Then we talked about myself generally: we both agree on this point, that my qualities for *painting* are slow to reveal themselves, but he says that it often has that effect, and then it comes, and that after all, nothing has ever been exacted after three years' work; that I want to get on too quickly, that

he is convinced I shall succeed; and I know not what. In fact I have told him so often not to spare me, I have insisted so much on being told the truth, that I believe he has been sincere. Besides, he has no interest in not telling the truth; and, after all, what he has said is not anything so tremendous. So here I am wound up again, and ready to paint the picture.

What a kind and amiable fellow this Tony is! He says that the most talented have only attained a small beginning of something after about ten years' work. That Bonnat after seven years' study was nothing; that he himself exhibited only at the eighth year. . . In short, I know that, but as I reckoned on being successful at twenty, you understand my reflections. At midnight I grow suspicious again. Tony seems too confident in my powers; I am looking for some awful trap.

CHAPTER IV.

PARIS, BERLIN, RUSSIA, BIARRITZ, SPAIN, 1881.

Saturday, January 1st.—I gave a bouquet to A—— to wear. She kissed me twice, and as we were alone I questioned her on the progress of her love, about its commencement, and she told me about it. It has lasted for six years now, without any change at all. She knows his step on the stairs, and the way in which he opens the door, and each time it affects her as it did in the first days. I understand it; if it were otherwise it would no longer be the same love. They say you get used to one another, that the sensations lessen; you see it's an error, and the love which changes or *becomes tame* is not the true love.

I should have a horror of changing. Very few persons are fortunate enough to feel real love, which is eternal even when it is not returned. People in general are incapable of experiencing so complete a feeling, or else they are drawn away from it, or prevented, and they are satisfied with fragments which do change; that is what makes a great many people shrug their shoulders when you speak of *eternal* or *unique* love, which is a very rare thing.

Real love may not be eternal, but it is always unique.

Sunday, January 2nd.—I open *Flamarande,* by George Sand, and it is a flunkey who tells the whole story; it is disgusting. The first twenty lines are sufficient for me. I am a Republican, and that is just the reason why I cannot consider flunkeys as equals. A servant loses certain rights when he consents to serve. . . It is odious to be always pottering about with servants as George Sand does. In spite of my indignation I read *Flamarande,* which is

the author's best work. The servants are in their proper places and the book is exquisite.

As I read very fast I finish the book, which is charming. I am going to read *Les Deux Frères*, which ends the volume.

Monday, January 3rd.—I finished *Les Deux Frères* at half-past twelve in the morning; it is pretty, but I have gained nothing by it. O Balzac!

Julian will not allow the partition to be opened until Sunday; during the week it would disturb the pupils. Therefore I lose a week; I have in all only ten weeks left, which is not long. And again I think that Tony and Julian are encouraging me to commence the picture, knowing that I shall not get through it. But what is their object? *Nescio.*

Wednesday, January 5th.—Tony arrives at the studio at the same time as myself this morning. I show him a little sketch and we talk of the picture. The room I am to work in is quite small, even with the partition down, it won't be a joke considering the dimensions of the canvas. Well! . . .

And then the notion of having it done by two people, it creates a sort of competition, which is very depressing. With all my brave airs, I am very nervous, and when A—— is there, I am half paralysed, and can't place a person in position, nor . . . . it is very embarrassing; and then it irritates me that two should be working at the same subject.

Ah! this picture bores me. Ah! I should like to do something else. Ah! these ups and downs are unbearable! A word elates or crushes me, and in order to save me from despair, Tony and Julian must pass their lives in singing my praises. When they only give advice, without either praise or blame, I am prostrate.

Friday, January 7th.—I relate all these rascalities I suffer from to the ladies at home, and as every one agrees with me, it's another proof that I am right. Some of them say that they had thought me firmer than to allow myself to be imposed upon. I admit it, but it is so lovely to *leave* duplicity and intrigues to others. I said "leave;" it is not exactly that I leave it to them, because I know myself to be utterly incapable of intrigues and mischief-making. It is so wearying, so tiresome, in fact, I don't know what to do. And then it is also a satisfaction to know oneself to be better than others. To be imposed upon, and to know it—why, it's a delicious feeling, it's almost a patent of honesty and candour. . . . And then there's conscience. . . . To have a clear conscience, and to see the meanness of others, to see oneself clean, and others soiled, even to the prejudice of one's own interests! But prejudice almost disappears under these conditions; the more one feels victimised, the more enjoyable it is. Evidently, at the first inkling, I ought to have said, "If that is the case, I will not paint your picture." . . . But that would fill A—— with joy, she would see her efforts crowned with success. If I do not withdraw, it is solely for that reason.

I say all this aloud, and add that I will let things go as they like, feeling convinced that A—— will not do anything to hamper me so horribly. I pretend to believe that it is impossible, and so I put a good face on the matter.

Saturday, January 8th.—I have a real passion for books. I arrange them, count them, and look at them; even this heap of old books makes my heart rejoice; I go to a distance to look at them as if they were a picture. I have about seven hundred volumes, but as they are nearly all of large size, they would make much more in the ordinary size.

Sunday, January 9th.—Potain refuses to keep me under his treatment, as I do not follow his directions.

Ah! I should love to go away—to Italy, to Palermo! Ah! the pure sky! Ah! the blue sea! Ah! the beautiful calm nights! The very thought of Italy drives me mad! It is like something very beautiful, for which you are not prepared. No, that isn't it. . . . I don't know how to express myself. . . . It seems to me like a great final happiness, towards which I should like to go, only when free of all preoccupation, of all trouble. When I say to myself, "Let us go!" I immediately think, "No, not yet; I have still to fight, to work, and, after that, I know not when, final rest—Italy." . . . I ask myself what there is there?. . . . but the effect on me is enchanting, magical, and inconceivable.

Oh yes; to go away! Since Charcot, Potain, and all the others, tell me to go, I must be very ill. I feel that the warm air yonder would cure me at once; but it is their fault.

Why does not mamma come back? They say that it is only a caprice on my part. Be it so; but it is always so. However . . . all is over. Still one more year perhaps; 1882 is the great date of my childish dreams. It was 1882, that I marked out as a culminating point, without knowing wherefore. Perhaps it will be death. This evening at the studio the skeleton was dressed up as Louise Michel, with a red scarf, a cigarette, and a palette knife for a dagger. There is a skeleton in me also; we *all* end *by that!* Horrible emptiness!

This morning I had already made a sketch—the Madeleine Flower Market. A beautiful Parisian lady, with a little boy, buying from an old market woman just coming out of her shop, which is full of flowers. The only thing to do is to paint what one sees; it is very natural; quite Parisian; very entertaining to paint and to look at, and perfectly easy to do in my studio. And then all these flowers, it is delightful; and it is easier than a set task, and more quickly done, and I can do it quietly at home . . . Well, I must see what Tony says, for Julian is bent on his shop.

Wednesday, January 12th.—All is settled. I begin my plans, sketches, &c., and as I think A—— will give up her picture, I will do mine, half life-size, and with many people in it.

Thursday, January 13th.—(*January 1st*, the Russian New Year's Day.) I still cough a little, and breathe with difficulty, but without any perceptible change, neither emaciation nor paleness. Potain does not come any more. It seems that my illness needs only air and sunshine; Potain is honest, and does not wish to cram me with useless medicines; but I am taking asses' milk and elatine. I know that one winter in the sunshine would have cured me, but . . . . I know better than anybody what is the matter with me. My larynx has always been subject to disease, and continual agitations have contributed very much to it; in short, I have nothing the matter but this cough and my ears. That is nothing, as you can see.

Saturday, January 15th.—I have begun work with M. Cot, who is going to take alternate days with Tony. I did not show him anything, though Julian had pointed me out as the person of whom he had spoken.

"Is it Mademoiselle," he said, "who is to do this?" pointing to the large canvas which they had so much difficulty in bringing in yesterday.

"Yes, Monsieur, most certainly; I am to paint this picture, under lock and key."

Julian then came to tell me that he had mentioned me to Cot as a very interesting pupil, &c. &c., and that if I had not shown him anything, it was out of shyness. All this, and more too, for the purpose of overcoming my dislike to receive advice.

As for Tony, he is an eminent man, a real artist, an academician, a high-art painter, and lessons from such people are always excellent. In painting, as well as in literature,

learn the grammar first, then your instinct will tell you whether you had better compose dramas or little ballads. So if Tony were to be murdered, I should choose Lefebvre, Bonnat, or even Cabanel . . . which would be distressing to me. Painters with temperaments like Carolus, Bastien-Lepage, Henner, force you against your will to imitate them; at that game you only learn the faults of those you copy . . . it is said. And then I should not like as a master a painter of single figures; I like to see a painter surrounded by a heap of historical pictures; it makes him an environment, *peoples* it, and makes me listen to his advice, though I often prefer a single figure to five or six pictures with thirty persons in each.

On the whole, this Cot looks good-natured—his *début* touches me. He is quite forty-seven, but neither stout nor bald, and he chatted gaily enough in the studio at No. 51. He was quite new when he came to us: over there he unbent.

The most uninteresting face in the world can be made interesting by certain arrangements. I have seen heads of the most ordinary models become superb—thanks to a hat, a Tam O'Shanter, or a drapery. All this is modestly to inform you that every evening, when I come in from the studio, dirty and tired, I wash myself, put on a white garment, and drape my head with a fichu of Indian muslin and lace, like Chardin's old women and Greuze's little girls. It makes my head more charming than you could think possible. . . . This evening the rather large fichu is arranged as the Egyptians wear them, and I don't know how it is, but my face has become magnificent. As a general rule, this epithet seems to clash with my face, but the drapery has worked the miracle. This makes me cheerful.

This has now become a habit. To be without anything on my head in the evening makes me uneasy, and "my sad thoughts" like to be under cover. I feel more at home, more at rest.

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Thursday, January 20th. — Let us talk of pleasant things. I went to Tony's, to show him my sketch, which he thinks very well arranged: he gives me some good advice, a great deal of encouragement, and his blessing on beginning to-morrow.

"You have never painted a large picture," he says.

"Never!"

"And you do not know a word of perspective?"

"M. Ingres did not, either."

"He lied."

"Was he jesting, then?"

"Absolutely! You are about to encounter enormous difficulties. Look well about you, and have good courage. Good courage!"

Good courage! I am made up of courage—upon my word! I am quite cheerful and pleased.

Friday, January 21st.—Without hurrying myself, I go in the morning to breakfast with the G——s, whom I have very much neglected; after which, at half-past eleven, I arrive at the studio, and commence my picture with very great pleasure. From the first stroke you feel whether it will go smoothly, or whether it will go "against the grain." Thank God! I think it is coming of itself. Mlle. de Villevielle posed, and then a little Turkish girl. I will first draw all my figures in crayon, then, when looking at the whole, we shall see what alterations are to be made. It amuses me! I am well in health, and gay! The heads in the foreground measure from twelve to fourteen centimètres.

I have not yet understood how one can give one's life for a being whom one loves—a perishable being—for whom you sacrifice yourself, because you love him. . . . But on the other hand, I do understand enduring tortures, and even dying for a principle — for liberty, for some-

thing which will better the condition of mankind in general.

I should myself defend all these fine things as much in France as in Russia. One's country must be considered after humanity; the distinctions between nations only consist in shades of difference after all, and I am always for simplifying and widening such questions.

If I don't go and make them transport me, it is because it is useless—and I hate what is useless. It is not cowardly to choose one's part, and it is quite natural to prefer to be martyred, like Saint Paul, than to be amongst the eleven thousand virgins. I admit in all candour that I should be distressed to be an unknown heroine, but I swear to you . . . .

Here I stop short. I was about to swear before God, and I am not quite sure that He exists. I think this without fear. If God exists, He could not be offended with my doubts, which are only an avowal of my ignorance.

I should take good care not to deny the existence of God, and I cannot sincerely affirm it when in cold-blood. Oh! in moments of anguish I am not so argumentative; I fall on my knees and invoke this God, of whom I am sure, then!

It seems to me nevertheless that there must be a supreme intelligence! . . . but not the God to whom I am accustomed . . . But then of what use is this supreme intelligence? . . . But I was about to . . . yes, to swear before God that I would give everything, even to the last drop of my blood, to help in saving some great principle dear to me.

I am calm; not a Louise Michel, not a Nihilist at all; but if I thought liberty in danger I should be the most furious of them all.

Saturday, January 22nd.—It is cold, there is snow everywhere; I go out before eight o'clock every morning.

The picture entertains me. Cot has seen it, but he only

says insignificant things, such as "It looks well at first sight, not bad," and then encouragements.

It is true that this is the first time I have been corrected. Cot has gone, Tony has come. I had asked him by letter to do so; it is very kind of him. Tony finds nothing to change and no hitch, and says that I am not getting on at all badly; that it can be made very interesting, and that I can but continue.

Julian comes next, and he is also kind. I can see that my work interests him, for he comes back often to look at it, encouraging and advising me. It is all going on so well that I can't believe in it. Now for two months of forgetfulness, of amusement and happiness.

After which I will go for a tour in Italy, until the opening of the Salon; three months and a half of pleasant life, it seems to me impossible; everything would be good.

Wednesday, January 26th.—Tuesday, after returning from the studio I felt in a fever, and remained until seven o'clock without light, shivering in a chair, half asleep, and with the picture always before my eyes as I have had it every night for the last week.

You must know that A—— has settled herself at the other end of the studio and is drawing my picture reversed, and each time she wishes to surpass me, she thinks she will manage it by taking measurements all the time; and that outstretched arm, that hand with the piece of charcoal, and her black perspective lines, dance in my eyes before my own picture.

Having taken a little milk only, the night was still more extraordinary; I was not asleep, for I rung the alarm clock several times, but the picture was always there and I was working at it; only I was doing the very opposite of what I ought to do, compelled by a supernatural power to obliterate what was good. Oh! it was dreadful! and I

could not keep still. I was as restless as a fiend trying to believe that it was a dream, but no! But can it be delirium? . . . I asked myself. I thought it was, and now I know what it was and should not mind, if it were not for the fatigue in my legs and all over me.

But the best of it is that, weak as I was, I waited for Julian to ask his opinion on a figure I had changed.

Yesterday he came and said that I had done very wrong. I had obliterated what was good prior to the dream. And yesterday evening, by a curious phenomenon, I could hear very, very well indeed.

I feel shattered.

Monday, January 31st.—Julian and Tony, especially Julian, for he has seen it more often, are satisfied with the picture. They told me so several times, and I was satisfied with it myself, and very much excited. Now it all falls to the ground; I am no longer satisfied with my composition, and in spite of repeating to myself that Tony has seen it twice and has told me that it is very well grouped and interesting, and that I must not change anything, I have lost confidence. Julian also tells me not to alter anything. In fact, everybody thinks it good, especially a group in the middle distance, which is considered very pretty; but I am not satisfied. I see it differently; alterations are not to be thought of, it is too late . . . . besides. . . .

It is curious all the same that so many things in this picture shock me and do not shock either Julian or Tony. . . . It is because they think I can do no better, and do not wish to let me run further in a wild-goose chase.

Thursday, February 3rd.—There before my eyes I have the portraits of my mother and my father when they were engaged. I have hung them on the wall as a document. According to Zola and other more renowned philosophers,

you must know the cause to understand the effect. I was born of a young, healthy, and exceedingly beautiful mother, with brown hair and eyes, and a dazzling skin; and a father who was fair, pale, and delicate in health, himself the son of a very vigorous father and a delicate mother, who died young; the brother of four sisters all more or less deformed from birth. . . . Grandpapa and grandmamma had good constitutions, and had nine children, all healthy and tall, and some of them handsome, for example, mamma and Étienne.

The delicate father of the illustrious offspring who occupies our thoughts has become strong and well, and the mother, brilliant with health and youth, has grown weak and nervous, thanks to the horrible existence which she has had to endure.

I finished *L'Assommoir* the day before yesterday; it nearly made me feel ill. So much was I struck by the truth of the book, that I seemed to live and converse with those people.

I was indignant at living and eating while all these horrors were going on around me, lower down. . . . Everybody ought to read this book, it would make people better. . . . But I am grown calmer, especially as it would be impossible for me to do anything alone. Who dare ignore the social problem?

Yes! yes, everybody must take it up. Ah, yes, it must be so! But Socialists are treated as rabble and as fools, and the Socialists often turn to Utopia. O chaos! and I am not even capable of writing a newspaper article.

Monday, February 7th.—My picture, which was out of order for an instant, owing to a figure which would not come right, is progressing again. I feel as light as a feather.

At one o'clock, Villevielle and Brisbane, my principal models, who are infinitely obliging, come with me to the Mirlitons.

I do not know if I looked carelessly, or if my eyes are opened, or if Carolus is making progress; but I am astounded

by his portrait—the woman with the little girl in red—I, who did not like Carolus (his red child at the last Salon and his blue woman disgusted me). But the two portraits this time are the most beautiful that can be seen. I still prefer the woman with the child, to the woman alone, who is old and made up. It is a great surprise. The woman is not beautiful, but she is a fine woman, sympathetic, and motherly, with a plum-coloured Louis XIII. dress, her breast bare and luminous. The light is carried on to the fair head of the child and is lost in the right hand of the woman, which rests on the child's shoulder. The left hand holds a fan and droops carelessly. Pearls are in her hair and on her arms; the hands are slightly done, and towards the bottom the painting is very scamped, in order to bring out the faces and the breast. It is a piece of superb light on a moss-green background. And how splendidly treated! It has breadth! And such a look of nature!

I like that better than the smoky and dead things in the museums. My favourite, Bastien-Lepage, is exhibiting the face of the Prince of Wales in the costume of Henry IV., with the Thames and the English fleet as a background. The tone of the background reminds you of La Joconde. The head is coarse, it looks just like a Holbein. You might take it for one; I don't admire this. Why imitate? If it were a copy, but it is not a copy; well it is extremely well done for an imitation. . . . . I don't like it.

Oh! if I could paint like Carolus Duran! . . . This is the first time that I find anything worth wishing for, something that I like for myself in painting. After having looked at that, everything else seems mean, dry, and dirty.

Saturday, February 12th.—I had just had my picture put into perspective, and then I saw that it changed everything. I ought not to have seen what I saw; but I ought to have supposed myself six yards off, so that my eyes saw the ladder

behind the head of Mlle. de Villevielle, and perspective showed me that it ought to be seen much more to the left. I do not understand how one can do what one does not see. And besides, when you draw correctly you ought not to make any faults of perspective. Perspective is necessary when drawing a temple, a pillar, and things of that kind; but a simple studio with women! I have lost four or five days with all this; at last Tony comes and says I am right. Use perspective when it agrees with your arrangement, but if it spoils the composition! Gammon! You can come to terms with it. Besides, how can you do a thing wrong, if you do exactly what you see?

Tony persists in being satisfied, and tells me to go on painting.

I am delighted.

At twelve o'clock the maid comes running in with her face flushed with excitement. M. Julian has been decorated. General rejoicing; this puts a stop to all that is going on in the house; we are jubilant; and A——, Neuvéglise, and I, hurry off to order a splendid basket of flowers with a large red bow from Vaillant-Roseau. Vaillant-Roseau is not an ordinary florist, he is a clever artist; one hundred and fifty francs—that is not too much. We attach to it a card bearing these words: "To M. Julian, from the ladies of the studio of Panorama Passage."

Villevielle comes back purposely at three o'clock to congratulate the master; he comes up with his ribbon, and I have the pleasure of seeing, for the first time in my life, a perfectly happy man. He admits it himself.—"There are, perhaps, some people who wish for something, but I, just at present, do not wish for anything else in the world!"

Then we go down, Villevielle and myself, to the studio of our decorated master to see the basket; joy, congratulations, and even a little emotion. He speaks to us of his old mother, whom he is afraid of startling by telling her the news too

suddenly; and of an old uncle, who would cry over it like a child.

Only think. It is a village yonder. You see the effect. . . . A poor little peasant, who left without anything . . . Chevalier of the Legion of Honour!

He was very nice when speaking of his family. Under the influence of emotion, the least good-natured amongst the pupils were speaking of offering a bronze, a souvenir, and I don't know what.

Then came some more pupils, my aunt, Neuvéglise, &c. He is delighted with our flowers, and with the bow. In fact, this goes on until half-past five.

Joking aside, it gives our atelier quite a different stamp, and as father Rodolphe is so happy as all that, it will make him indulgent.

Sunday, February 13th.—Here is a letter from mamma, very affectionate—

"January 27, Kharkov, Grand Hotel.

"My adored angel, my darling child Moussia, if you knew how unhappy I am without you, especially as I am anxious about your health; and how I should like to leave as soon as possible!

"You, my pride, my glory, my happiness, and my joy! Could you but imagine the sufferings that I endure without you! Your letter written to Mme. Anitskoff is in my hands, and, like a lover, I am always reading it over and over, and I moisten it with my tears. I kiss your little hands and your little feet, and I beg of God that I may be able to do it in reality as soon as possible.

"I fondly embrace our dear aunt.

"M. B."

Monday, February 14th.—The head in Brisbane's (Alice's) portrait was painted in two hours, and Julian tells me to

leave it as it is. And at other times it takes a week to do some trumpery thing. A part of the bodice and of the apron are also done. The professor of perspective comes and preaches to me for twenty-five minutes upon the necessity of submitting myself to his infallible rules. But what of Tony? . . . . and myself!

This man cannot be mistaken, as they are fixed rules; but Tony and myself? I don't know. Let us not go too deep, so as not to fatigue ourselves just when we want our minds to be very free, so as to paint the masterpiece quietly.

But I vote for the mathematician.

Friday, February 18th.—Worries! The drawings having been all jumbled up together, half of them remained unjudged. Great emotion! Julian gets up and begins explaining I don't know what. I was thinking of something else, and, leaning against the door, yawned formidably, which clearly meant, "Ah! how all that bores me!" . . . . Julian, already exasperated, turns round and tells me that if it does not amuse me, I have only to go home. I found no reply, not having done it purposely, and not having had the least wish to be impolite.

The illustrious artist has passed me by without correcting my work for the last two days, and it puts me in a very awkward position at the studio . . . . which worries me!

Saturday, February 19th.—Tony says I am getting on very well; after having given me a good lesson, he goes to correct A——, to whom he says hardly anything, he is very embarrassed; he begs her to change some figures which are not correct, I think.

She gets quite red about it, and instead of talking with him as usual, she sits in her place and works feverishly, while that angel of a Tony comes back to my picture; he examines it, gives me some hints, encourages me, and repeats several times that I am doing very well.

I am so delighted that I forget Julian's coldness, which, however, bothers me . . . .

For about ten days I have been dreaming always of grandpapa, of grandmamma, and of my family . . . . And then I nearly always dream either of the people I am to see on the morrow, or else I continue the day's work in my dreams, and I never sleep without dreaming.

Tuesday, February 22nd.—I have made peace with Julian; I said to him:—"Monsieur Julian, what! do you still bear me malice for a thing which I did not do on purpose? Won't you come and correct me?" And he came with a dignified air, saying that as I admitted my fault, it was all right! I did not reply for I was not in the wrong; but I hate quarrels, and it put my picture into disorder.

Thursday, March 3rd.—I am very ill, I cough very much, I breathe with difficulty, and there is an ominous rattling in my throat . . . . I think it is called *laryngeal phthisis.*

I have opened the New Testament, which has been forgotten for some time, and twice, in the space of a few days, I have been struck by the appropriateness with which the line, picked out at random, answered to my thoughts. I have come back to praying to Christ and the Virgin, and to belief in miracles, after having been a Deist, with days of absolute atheism. But the religion of Christ, *according to his own words,* is very little like your Catholicism or our orthodoxy, which I abstain from following, limiting myself to following the precepts of Christ, and not embarrassing myself with the allegories taken in earnest, with the superstitions, and the different absurdities introduced into religion later on by mere men, for political or other motives.

Wednesday, March 16th.—Tony has come; he finds

several things very good, others good; on the whole *it is not bad.* After all, I am not very well satisfied.

Bojidar, who has returned from Nice, will go with the pictures and the porters.

Friday, March 18th.—I have completed the picture all but a few finishing touches.

Julian thinks it has gained enormously this last week, and that it is good now.

Tony has not seen the alteration in the centre; the three principal figures, although in the middle distance, have been repainted and changed, and others too, and some hands.

I feel myself that it is better now; we shall see what Tony says to-morrow. There are in all sixteen persons, and the skeleton, which makes seventeen.

Saturday, March 19th.—Well, I am not pleased. Tony thinks, as he did before, that there are several good bits, but that the whole does not deserve compliments; he explains to me at full length what I must do to it, and gives a few strokes with the brush, which I afterwards remove.

At half-past four Julian comes; we stop work and talk. I had commenced at a quarter to eight. I was tired, especially so at not having obtained any expressions of "very good," from Tony.

Mon Dieu! I am well aware it is bright and spirited, but there is an enormous lack of knowledge!

Julian cries out that he is furious at having given me such an extraordinary subject for my first large picture.

Ah! "if it were only your second!"

Ah yes! "Well then, Monsieur, let us reserve it for next year."

He looked at me, his eyes glistening with hope at finding

me worthy and capable of giving up the vain satisfaction of exhibiting an incomplete and mediocre thing. He would be delighted if I would give it up, so should I; but what about *the others*, my friends? It would be said that what I have done has been judged by the professors to be too bad, that I was not equal to a large picture, in fact, that I have been refused at the Salon.

Query: Have I done all that I could excepting a few little things? Yes, certainly! but I have found myself face to face with things entirely unknown, of which I had no suspicion; in any case I have learnt a great deal. Julian thinks that I have made a great effort, that it is not bad, that it is amusing; but that it is enough to make one tear one's hair to think what it might have been. Ah! I wish the canvas might be torn, so as not to be forced to exhibit it. For I am compelled to do so by a silly vanity punished beforehand, because I am afraid of the indifference of the public and the chaff of the men down-stairs. It is not precisely chaff, but they will say:—
"Well, the strongest of your ladies is not strong!"

Oh dear! it might have been foreseen, Julian ought to have foreseen it. But he says that it is because I have worked too much upon my canvas; that if I had painted as I commenced, it would have been good! And there is the study of the model, a little fellow ten years old. No, if I had done that as the week's study, I should have scratched it all out; it is bad, and, above all, the design is commonplace, without character, and absolutely unworthy of me; it is the worst of pictures.

Ah! it's vexing; but what is to be done?

Sunday, March 20th.—At the Palais de l'Industrie. It was very amusing, the crowd were shouting and making remarks on the unfortunate pictures as they arrived. Bojidar had gone in, and I had some difficulty in making

myself known as the author; at last I run through, elegant and admired by my dear colleagues; we find ourselves again with the everlasting Bojidar, and I manage to see a few pictures.

Mine seems small enough, though it is four feet six inches high by six feet wide. A group of men stood before it. I fled, so as not to hear their remarks, for it seemed to me that people knew it was mine.

I have spoken seriously to Julian, I have explained my feelings to him. I do not wish him to think me capable of silly vanity; no, I do not say that out of bravado, and I shall have no heart-breaking; do not mistake me for one of the nervous women, please don't! In fact he understands very well, and so do I. He says I shall be honourably received and that I shall even have some success, but not the success I had dreamed of. The men from down-stairs will not come and stand rooted in front of the picture: What, is it a woman who has done this? At last I suggested having an accident with it to save my vanity, but he will not consent. He had expected a success; he admits that his pride is not quite satisfied, but that it can go. And under these conditions I exhibit!

Alas, yes! I know he encourages me, because he does not believe in my sensible resolutions. In spite of my declarations, he thinks me a woman, and thinks that he would hurt me if he told me the simple truth.

Nevertheless, I have told him all! . . . That is that I am a serious pupil, and need not exhibit to get lessons. I exhibit out of vanity. So if it is bad, it does not matter. But it is over! I am rid of the picture—but the anxiety till the 1st of May, inclusive? . . . If I only have a good number!

Oh! I am going to paint torsos, and make sketches! You shall see.

Thursday, March 24th.—I discover a pot of tar under my bed. This is an attention on Rosalie's part for my health, from the advice of a fortune-teller!

My family considers this mark of devotion admirable on the part of a servant. Mamma was quite touched. I pour a pail of water on the carpet, under the bed: I break a pane of glass, and sleep in my work-room—all out of anger. It is the same as that bore about airing my clothes!

My family imagine that I have some deep design in getting myself frozen. It vexes me to such a pitch that often I do not wrap up, so as to give them a proof that their persistence is useless. Oh, these people make me burst with rage! . . .

Tuesday, March 29th.—I hear at the studio that Breslau is already accepted, and I have no news of my picture. I worked until twelve, and then we did some shopping, which seemed to me atrociously long.

I have exhausted all the tacit arguments in the world, and I have only gained a fever and a headache — though I appear calm, it is true.

But that stupid Rosalie having been to ask the ladies for some money to send off the telegram in which I express my anxieties to Tony, they read the message. This is dreadful. I can neither appear at the school nor stay here. Oh, my family! . . . I do not wish you my sufferings, no matter who you may be.

Wednesday, March 30th.—I pretended to sleep until ten o'clock, so as not to go to the studio, and I am very miserable.

Here is Julian's reply. It calms me a little. . . Only think. No, you cannot imagine what it would be to me if the picture were refused. It would no longer be . .

In fact, *I could only grumble at myself!* And I don't know which is worse—to be the cause of one's own misfortunes, or to suffer because of others. . . . Ah! it would be like a shot right in your chest. I don't know what I should do. . . . But I must hope. . . .

Friday, April 1st.—April fools apart, I am queen. Julian came himself to tell me so yesterday after midnight, after leaving Lefebvre's. We had some punch at the studio. Bojidar, without my asking him, went to get information from Tidière (a young man from down-stairs), and assures me that I have No. 2. This seems too good to be true.

Sunday, April 3rd.—Never did Patti sing with more spirit than she did yesterday; her voice had such fulness, such freshness, and such brilliancy! The bolero from the *Vêpres Siciliennes* was encored.

Ah! what a lovely voice I had once. It was powerful, dramatic, fascinating; it sent a shiver down your back. And now, nothing left, not enough to speak of.

Shall I not get better? I am young, I might perhaps. . . .

Patti does not move you, but she can make you weep with astonishment; it is really like fireworks. Yesterday I was positively startled when she poured forth a flood of notes, they were so pure, so high, and so delicate! . . .

Tuesday, April 5th.—A surprise! My father has arrived. I was sent for at the studio, and I find him in the dining-room with mamma, who is lavishing a thousand loving attentions upon him, also Dina and Saint-Amand, who are delighted with the sight of this conjugal happiness.

We go out together, Monsieur, Madame, and bêbé. We go to the shops for Monsieur, then to the Bois, and then for an instant to see the Karageorgevitches.

He has no doubt come to take mamma away, but I don't know anything yet, we are too excited.

Wednesday, April 6th.—I am kept back until nine o'clock by the *pater*, who insists that I shall not go to my work; but my torso interests me too much, and I only see the august family again at dinner, after which they go to the theatre, and I remain alone.

My father *does not understand at all* how one can be an artist, or how it can bring you fame. I sometimes think that he only affects to have such notions.

Saturday, April 23rd.—I took the portrait of B—— to Tony; he at first thinks it very well arranged, and then after a few hints he says that it is astonishingly good for one who has studied so little as I have.

"Yes, it is wonderfully good, and if you go on working like . . . ." But I interrupt him by saying that I mean to work more; as much as I am able to, and more.

I am enchanted, *it is wonderfully good*! Capital! I am not then making merely estimable progress. Ah! I breathe again! I had already classed myself amongst the distinguished pupils. Ah! *nom d'un chien*, what luck!

The portrait is handsome. B—— is dressed in a white cambric dress, open and gathered, with short puff sleeves, a pink ribbon round her waist, under the breast, a straw-coloured shawl round her, and covering her arms; in her left hand she is listlessly holding a rose. . . . The head is full face, quite straight, half faint shadow, and half light. Background neutral, greyish green, warm, and transparent. Do not imagine that I attribute any talent to myself; not yet; but the arrangement is pretty, the woman is beautiful, and it is wonderfully good for a person who has not been working long.

Sunday, May 1st.—Alexis comes early; he has a ticket

for two, so that, together with mine, four of us can go—Monsieur, Madame, Alexis, and myself. I am not very well satisfied with my appearance: a costume of grey woollen stuff, very dark, with a black hat, elegant, but rather commonplace. We immediately find my work, which is in the first room on the left of the room of honour, on the second row. I am delighted with the place, and very much astonished that the picture looks so well as it does. It is not good, but I expected it to look horrible, and it looks pretty.

But, by mistake, my name has been omitted from the catalogue (I spoke of it, and it is to be rectified). One cannot see properly on the first day, as one hurries to see everything at once. Alexis and myself fall away a little from my parents to make our way to the right and to the left, and finally we quite lose them, and I take his arm for a little while; in short, I free myself from them, and come and go fearlessly. A number of acquaintances, heaps of compliments, which do not seem forced. It's quite natural; these people who do not know much about it, only see a good-sized picture with many figures in it, which makes a very respectable appearance.

A week ago I gave a thousand francs to the poor. Nobody knows of it, I went to the large office and escaped again rapidly without waiting for thanks; the administrator must have thought that I had stolen it to give it away. Heaven is rewarding me for my money.

Abbema, who is walking with Bojidar, sends me a message to say that my picture pleases him, that it looks like a man's work, is interesting, &c. A few minutes afterwards we meet, and make the acquaintance of the celebrated friend of Sarah Bernhardt.

She is a very nice girl, and I appreciate her praise, especially as Bojidar informs me that she has just fallen out with B——, whom she told that he was going back, and that she did not like the pictures he had sent this year.

We breakfasted there; and stayed altogether for six hours amidst the arts. I will not tell you anything about the pictures; I only want to say that I think very highly of Breslau's picture; great qualities, but indifferent drawing and stupid loading of colour. Fingers like birds' claws, noses with clefts in them, nails, and harshnesses, and then extravagant daubing on of the paint; in fact, it savours of impressionism, and is an imitation of Bastien-Lepage.

Where did you ever see such smudgings and such loadings in nature?

But never mind, there is good in it, and people are looking at these three heads placed between the portrait of Wolff and the beggar, by Bastien-Lepage.

Friday, May 6th.—I spent this morning at the Salon, where I met Julian; he introduced Lefebvre to me, who told me that there were many qualities in my picture. I am a very little girl.

At home nothing but conversations about the changes which are to take place. They all bother me! My father has ideas which are sometimes absurd; he does not believe in them, but he sticks to them, as he does to saying that all depends on my consenting to spend the summer in Russia.

"It will be seen that you are not outside your family circle," he said.

Have I ever been so! This trick of making me responsible is repulsive. And now my cup is filled up; I cannot speak a word about it without bursting into tears. They will do nothing, or cannot! Well, I will wait and see! But at least I will not travel; I will remain quietly (?) at home and I can fret in my chair, where I am physically comfortable.

Oh, lassitude! Oh, misery! Ought I to feel this at my age? Is it not enough to cripple a character? And this is what saddens me; if ever I get any joy, or a happier existence, shall I be able to enjoy it? shall I be able to

take advantage of what may present itself? I think I no longer see as others do, and that . . . but that is enough of it. . . . And at night, quite tired and half asleep, divine harmonies pass through my head—the music comes and goes, you follow it like an orchestra, the melody of which develops in you and in spite of you.

Saturday, May 7th.—My father wants to leave to-morrow, and mamma must go. That upsets everything. And I, shall I go? Why remain? I can work there in the open air, and we will return for Biarritz.

Some say that Ems would be good for me. . . . . Ah! everything is a matter of indifference. There is nothing for me.

Sunday, May 8th.—Now I am almost glad to see my health giving way for want of the joys which Heaven denies me.

And when I am totally done up, perhaps everything will change, and then it will be too late.

Each one for himself, certainly; but yet my family pretend to love me so much, and they do nothing. . . . . I am no longer anything myself, there is a veil between me and the rest of the world. If we knew what is to come hereafter but we do not! This curiosity will render death less frightful to me.

I exclaim ten times a day that I want to die, but this is a form of despair. We think, "I want to die," but it is not true, it is but a way of saying that life is horrible; we still want to live all the same, especially at my age. But do not be distressed, I shall last for some time yet. No one can be blamed. It is God who wishes it.

Sunday, May 15th.—However, in a word, I am going to Russia, if they will wait a week for me. It would be dreadful

to me to have to be present at the distribution of prizes. That is a very great sorrow which none know about excepting Julian. So I am going. I went *incognito* to consult a great doctor, C——. My ears will get better; the coating of the right lung is diseased, and has been so for a long time, there's pleurisy, the throat is all wrong. I asked him all this in terms which forced him to tell me the truth, after having well examined the case.

I must go to Allevard, and follow a course of treatment. All right, I will go on my way back from Russia, and from there to Biarritz. I will work in the country, in the open air —that does one good. I write all this with rage in my heart.

But here at home the situation is heartrending. On the one hand, mamma is distressed at going, and I am overwhelmed by the thought of staying with my aunt—a stupid superstition.

And on the other hand, my aunt who has but us, but myself in the world, and who says nothing, but who is cut to the heart to see that I am suffering at the thought of remaining with her.

My strength is all gone. I sit all day with my teeth set, to keep me from crying, a choking sensation in my throat, and a buzzing in my ears, and a strange sensation as if my bones were coming through the flesh, which is leaving me. And that poor aunt who would like to see me pleased and hear me speak, and to have me with her! I tell you that I have no strength left, that I believe in nothing and I think anything possible. I don't care whether we go or stay, but I think they will not stay so long with me. But I don't know. It is Breslau's honourable mention or medal which drives me away. Ah! I am unlucky in everything! I shall have to die miserable, I who believed and prayed so much. . . . At last, after the most trying uncertainties possible in the world, the departure is fixed for Saturday.

Monday, May 16th.—I went to see Julian, and we talked long and seriously. He says I am very foolish to go to Russia. "The doctors are advising you to go South, and you are going North." He said such wise and sensible things to me that I am more than shaken. And in order that I should not think that he is speaking from self-interest he advises me to leave Paris and go into the country, and work in a warm place where I shall be wrapped in air and sunshine all day long. So I must paint a large landscape with figures, in the summer, and during the winter I will do a studio picture; that will give me two very different works to send in.

And I am not to follow in anybody's footsteps, neither in Bastien's, nor anybody else's (that's one for you, Breslau). I am one of those who must remain true to themselves. In short, he thinks well of me, and always gives excellent advice, good and encouraging words. And he is very severe, notwithstanding; and I am obedient. I speak to him almost without reserve, and I think he is flattered by it.

But in order to do good painting it is necessary to take care of one's self! I know that! This man openly advises me not to go to Russia though it is the wish of my family. "Your family will regret it later on." He said this to mamma at the risk of offending her, when she called for me. And indeed, if it were to hurt me! Ah! I am not happy . . . but I will take care of myself; I will go away to Allevard, and stay there five weeks, that will bring me to July. Then I will spend a month in the forest of Fontainebleau . . . No! stay in Paris in June, until the 15th; start on the 15th for Allevard until the 20th of July, then a month at Fontainebleau with frequent visits to Paris to show my studies; about the 20th of August I must come back and get my clothes ready for Biarritz, the 1st of September; after a month at Biarritz come back here and work, taking due care of myself. And let Russia go to the devil!

Friday, May 20th.—In a word, I have begun to hesitate again! Oh dear! Potain comes, and I reckoned on him for not going to Russia and for not vexing my father too much. It is all right, I am not to go.

But Bojidar is the one who gives me the mortal blow: "The jury went round the Salon to-day, and looked long at Breslau's picture!" Oh dear! the tears which had already flowed, begin again in torrents. My father and mother think that it is what Potain said that causes my grief, and I cannot admit the truth, but I am weeping in earnest; no grimaces or sobs, but real big silent tears in profusion, which fall like summer rain without much disfiguring the face.

Potain did not say anything particularly new, and he enabled me to remain here; but it is Breslau's picture! It is dreadful. What shall I tell you? One day! . . . I begged of Potain to exaggerate my state of health, and simply to tell my family that the right lung is diseased, so that my father will not be too vexed at my remaining behind.

And here they are both quite distressed, walking on tiptoe. . . . Ah! misery; their consideration wounds me, their concessions exasperate me . . . . and no support anywhere! What shall I hold on to? Ah! painting is a fine farce! You know how, in times of trouble, we are never quite miserable when we have a bright spot of any sort on our horizon. I used to answer myself, saying, "Wait a while, painting will save us." Now I doubt everything, I believe neither in Tony nor in Julian. Is it by dint of crying that I expect to paint!!!

Monday, May 23rd.—At last everything is packed, and here we are at the station. Then, at the moment of starting, my hesitation affects the others; I begin to cry, and mamma follows suit with Dina and my aunt; and my father comes and asks what's to be done? I reply by my tears. The bell rings, we run to the carriage, where they had not taken a ticket for

me, and they get into an ordinary compartment (which I would not do). I want to get in too, but the door is closed; I have no ticket, and we part without even saying adieu.

Ah! we grumble, and hate each other, but when the parting comes, we forget all that. On the one side mamma, on the other my aunt, and my father in the middle. He must be furious, for, on the whole, he has been very kind. But this useless journey, this loss of time; and then, I don't know anything more. I cried at the idea of going, and I am crying at remaining behind. I scarcely care about Breslau now, but altogether . . . . I don't know anything more about it. I really think that I can nurse myself better here, and that I shall not lose time.

Tuesday, May 24th.—I am much distressed at not having gone.

I have gratuitously offended my father by remaining here. My summer will be, nevertheless, cut up in pieces, as I must go to the baths at the end of June. Instead of spending three weeks here to see Breslau get the medal, and remaining shut up, sad and languid, in this Paris, where it is suffocating, I should have been in the country. I really must escape from this unbearable position. Indeed, I am an idiot. O—— cries, and begs of me to stay, thinking that this journey would be fatal to me, and that the terrible M. Bashkirtseff would keep me over there. What nonsense! And I am softened enough, am sufficiently anything you like to allow myself to be influenced!

I am going to telegraph to Berlin for them to wait for me, and I will start.

Berlin, Wednesday, May 25th.—So I started yesterday; my aunt, seeing me miserable at remaining in Paris, does not cry, fearing that I will reproach her with influencing me by her emotion. But she is sad unto death, and thinks she will

never see me any more. The poor woman, who adores mamma, adores me doubly for her sake, and I am as disagreeable as possible to her. I even wonder how it is possible to make such a bad return for such noble devotion. She has been accustomed by grandmamma since I was born, to consider me as the ideal of the whole world. Now, it matters not what I do, she lavishes nothing but care and kindness upon me. I need not even ask for anything, she watches my fancies all the more because she knows that I am very unhappy and ill. She can do nothing . . . . except not to allow my material life to be uncomfortable.

My health is undermined, and my poor family, exaggerating everything, think me as good as lost.

But I have always had the consolation of seeing the most beautiful fruit, the first vegetables of the season on the table, with my favourite dishes, each time that I have any visible grief. These attentions may seem foolish, but there is something touching in them. Yet I cannot appear gentle; poor aunt has noticed, without my whispering a word about it, that I avoid as much as possible every human face; so having seen that the supper was prepared she ran away leaving me alone with a book. When there are three or four members of my family I can stand them, and talk with them; but one alone is an intimacy which embarrasses me, and I sit sulking, while I reproach myself with my want of affection to a woman so devoted and so virtuous! For we are very virtuous people, my poor aunt is an angel in that respect.

So I am off.

I went to see Tony, who is very ill, and for whom I left a letter of thanks, and to see Julian, who was out. He might, perhaps, have made me change my mind, and remain here, and I wanted a change . . . . For a week none of the family liked to look at each other for fear of bursting into tears; and, left alone, I cried all the time, while

I also felt all the time how cruel it was to my aunt .... But still she must have seen also that I cried at the thought of leaving her. She fancies I do not like her at all, and when I think of this heroic creature's entire life of sacrifice, I burst into tears: she has not even the consolation of being loved like a good aunt ....! and yet I don't love any one more ....

At last I am at Berlin, my family and Gabriel are at the station; we dine together. But the crowning horror of all is the state of my ears .... I have been struck there in a frightful manner. . . . With a nature like mine, it is the most cruel thing which could have happened. . . . So that I dread all that I wished for, and it is an awful state of things. Now that I have more experience, that I am beginning perhaps to have talent, and that I am better able to do things .... I feel that the world would be mine if I could hear as I used to. And with my ailment this scarcely happens once in a thousand cases, so say all the doctors whom I have consulted. "Be reassured, you will not become deaf through your larynx, that very rarely happens!" And it is just my case .... You cannot imagine all the dissimulation and continual tension which is necessary to endeavour to hide this odious infirmity. I manage it with those who have known me before, and who see me seldom, but at the studio, for instance, it is known!

And the amount of intelligence which it robs you of! how can one be bright or witty!

Ah! All is over.

Faskorr (*after Kieff*), *Thursday, May* 26*th.*—I was in need of this long journey; plains, plains, plains everywhere. It is very beautiful, I am fond of the steppes .... as a novelty .... it looks almost infinite .... when there are forests or villages it is no longer the same. Most

charming is the obliging, amiable look of all the employés, even to the loafers, as soon as you get into Russia; the Custom House people talk as if they knew you. But I have had already eighty-six hours in the train, and I have thirty more to spend in it. These distances are stupefying.

Gavronzy, Sunday, May 29th.—Yesterday, in the night, we arrived at Poltava. I was counting very much on the joys of our welcome, a good hot supper, &c.

Paul and Alexander came alone to meet us, and had not even taken rooms for us at the hotel, thinking that we would go straight to the country. Horrible!

Paul has become awfully fat. This morning came Kapitanenko, Wolkovisky, &c., also a stranger, Lihopoy—fairly good-looking and gentlemanly. My father is very happy, but rather confused at seeing what a depressing effect this country has upon me after five years' absence. I do not try to hide it, and knowing my father I do not flatter him.

It is cold, there is abominable mud, and Jews . . . and it is all in a state of siege—sinister rumours are afloat. Poor country!

We have reached the country house. . . The fields are still flooded by the river—pools of water everywhere, mud, fresh verdure, lilacs in bloom; but it is in a valley—I have an idea that it will be damp. A nice way of nursing oneself! It is mortally dull. I open the piano and improvise something funereal. Coco howls plaintively. I feel ready to cry, and form the project of leaving again to-morrow. . .

Soup, smelling of onion, is served—I leave the dining-room. This astonishes the Princess and Paul's wife a little. Paul's wife is fairly good-looking; superb black hair, a beautiful complexion, not a bad figure, and a good little

wife. I try to be like everybody else, but I can't manage it. The unpacking of the boxes is more exciting. But I do not follow what is being said—and for a reason. I must nurse myself! How can I in this damp place? Ah, how right Julian was!

Mamma has brought all the papers which mention me: and with my . . . Paris vexations they make me a halo here.

Wednesday, June 1st.—Mme. Gorpintchenko has arrived. Michel has gone again.

The weather is fine, the lilacs are in bloom, the spring is exquisite, but too cold for my unfortunate carcase. I have not brought any canvases — there are none of the sort I want.

Saturday, June 4th.—Julian writes that Tony R. F. has an attack of inflammation, through coming from his mother's in an open carriage, and finds himself all of a sudden between life and death. He weeps, knowing that it is all up with him. Is it not horrible? without mentioning the father, who is eighty-five years, and the mother whom poor Tony was so afraid of losing.

Sunday, June 5th.—I telegraphed yesterday to Julian for news of Tony, for I am anxious.

I am out of doors all the day doing some studies. The weather is very fine. I cannot believe that this man, still so young, may die . . . but he has changed very much during the last six months.

Monday, June 6th (May 25th).—Tony is saved! I am delighted at it. Rosalie bursts into tears, saying that if he had died, it would have made me ill. That is a little exaggerated—but she is a good girl. With the telegram arrives a letter from Julian bringing the good news.

This is what Zola says of Jules Vallès . . . . "Imagine a sensitiveness hidden like something ridiculous, a brutality often intentional, and, above all, a passion for life, for the busy hum of men, and you have his whole nature . . . lively too, 'chaffing' readily, rather in a hurry perhaps for fear of being himself chaffed, hiding his tears under a bitter irony." I think this is like me. But we look so stupid when we appraise ourselves like that.

Monday, June 13*th* (1*st*).—I have commenced a peasant girl, life-size, standing, leaning on a palisade formed of dry branches like basket work. . . .

Some planks and straw have been put on the floor to protect me from the damp, and a little movable pavilion has been placed there; it has two rooms, so that I am very comfortable. Mamma, Paul, Nini, Papa, Michel, Dina, and Spérandio, spend a portion of the day there.

Monday, June 27*th* (15*th*).—I have been working since . . ; to-day is the thirteenth day, for the rain has made me lose many days. It is nearly finished. I mean to paint the head a third time if I have time. Paul and his wife have gone to visit an estate of mamma's, and Monsieur and Madame are at Poltava. There are four of us at home—the Princess, Dina, Spérandio, and myself. The rain has forced us at least ten times to take shelter in the pavilion (a real gipsy's cart), and now that we have come in-doors it is fine; I lose an hour. The day before yesterday I wanted to cut my canvas in pieces since yesterday I have had a working fit.

I have made the sketch for one of my Salon pictures The subject fascinates me, and I burn with impatience to do it.

Wednesday, July 6th (June 24th).—I have finished my picture, and it is better than anything I have yet done, especially the head, which I painted three times. But not having drawn it with enough care I find that the arm is a little too short, and that there is some awkwardness in the attitude. And these faults are not permissible in my case, as I possess the qualities required for avoiding them. I should have left it several times, for after all it would have been as well to do several studies as to finish this with the arm too short. I was all the time in hopes that my father would buy it, as he had not given me any present, and I having come here. . . .; but it does not seem to take.

There is a fair in the village, we go to it, and amuse ourselves by throwing all the sweets we can find to the crowd; it is like the confetti at the Carnival. All those hands stretched out simultaneously produce an excellent effect, all those people casting themselves on the ground at once have the look of a human wave.

A crowd is a fine sight!

Thursday, July 7th.—Nini, her sister, and Dina, came with me to my room, and we talked of unlucky things, apropos of broken mirrors. As to three candles, I have had them two or three times here. Am I going to die? There are moments when this idea turns me cold. But when I believe in God I feel less afraid, though. . . I wish to live. Or perhaps I shall become blind, that would be the same thing for I should kill myself. . . But what is to be found hereafter? What matter? But still we escape the pains we know. Or perhaps I shall become quite deaf? I force myself to write this word, which scorches my pen. . . My God, but I can't even pray as formerly. If it is the death of a relation. . . of my father! . . .

But if it is mamma? I shall never forgive myself for having said one disagreeable word to her.

What injures me with God is no doubt that I keep account of the slightest movements of my soul, and cannot keep myself from thinking that such and such a thought may be imputed to me as wrong, and such and such another as good; moreover, as soon as I know that it is *good*, there is no more merit in it, it is all lost. If I have any generous, or kind, or Christian impulse, I notice it directly; consequently, in spite of myself, I feel satisfaction in thinking what this ought, in my opinion, to bring me in return. . . . And under those considerations all merit vanishes.

For instance, just now I had an impulse to go down and throw myself into mamma's arms and humiliate myself; and of course the thought which followed this was about the advantage to myself, and all was lost. Then I felt that it would not cost me much to act in this way, and that in spite of myself I should do it a little cavalierly, or in a childish way; for a genuine, serious, and impulsive movement is impossible between us. I have never been known as anything except a joker, and it would not seem natural, they would think I was acting a comedy.

Saturday, July 9th.—We are all off on the pilgrimage, and then we go to Krementchoug, where we shall go boating on the Dnieper. I am playing at being an infidel, or nearly one, and drive them to this excursion.

After a thousand indecisions, we make up our minds. You cannot imagine what a business it is—and why do it? Perhaps we had better not go, for after all, how shall we get on? Shall we find anything to eat, or a place to sleep in? Well, there is a village, we must take Vassil to cook. It is terrible; there is a mountain near Gavronzy which one cannot avoid scaling, so they ought to be used to it; but no, each time it is as though a

new and terrible obstacle had just arisen. At last, after each person in turn had said that he will stop behind, or that such and such another has said he will not go on, we start in three carriages: Monsieur and Madame, Dina, Catherine the Swiss, Nini's sister, and Spérandio; Nini, myself, Paul, and Micha. About half way there, Paul and Micha sing heartily, to the astonishment of the peasants on the road. We find the three brothers Babanine—Étienne, Alexander, and Wladimir—together at the hotel, drinking champagne.

Alexander talks of love matters, of relations, of remembrances of youth; in short, he is as open as a carriage entrance when it is open. . . . So I at once guess that there is something, and indeed he has just bought his part of the inheritance from Étienne, who has run through it as well as the others. So there is only Nicholas left; but he will do the same, in spite of what he says. And *then* Alexander will have *all* his father's *lands.* This man has such a power of will that he goes straight to his aim and attains it. He is a power. I bow; I almost respect him. He has quarrelled with Paul, and will gobble him up, but I mean to reconcile them.

As we have no business in common, our intercourse is quite friendly, and I took his arm this evening in the public gardens. But it seems that we have the most *chic* and uproarious day that could be dreamt of in Poltava, and that it will be talked about. So I will relate it to you. We dine at the above-mentioned garden, a table set for fifteen people occupying the whole of the right side on the terrace, and where the public is not allowed to annoy us. They are crowding together at the least respectful distance possible to see us eat, and to listen to the band which is playing for us, and the choir of women which we had sent for. Gipsy songs, badly sung by Russians and Swedes. I should have liked to ring the alarm bell, for the people did not arrive quickly enough. It was full at about eight o'clock.

Monday, July 11th.—It is Saint Paul's day. The military band from Gavronzy has been sent for to play during dinner, and in the evening on the balcony. In bringing over the soldiers and instruments one of the drivers got his leg broken, and we at once gave him the day's winnings, which amounted to fifty roubles. The idea was mine. Not many people: Lihopay, Étienne, and the proprietor of the hotel at which we alight at Poltava. The gentlemen play cards with him and admit him into their society. He married a young lady of noble birth; but the society of this innkeeper! . . . . well! With the family we number fourteen. I am dressed exquisitely. Dina also looks charming. For a while I talk and laugh with Lihopay and Micha, as though it amused me. Others were listening to hear what amusing things we were saying. We dance. Papa and mamma opposite Paul and his wife, Micha and myself opposite the Swiss girl and Étienne, Spérandio, and Catherine. The room is vast, and with the help of the music our feet become lively. Dina is like a mad girl, dancing all sorts of fancy steps quite alone, and really very gracefully. I also, notwithstanding my wretched trouble (my ears), which is turning my hair white, danced for an instant without gaiety but without pretension either.

Wednesday, July 13th.—Always sad—perhaps about going; we arrive at Poltava at about seven o'clock. I travel with Dina and we talk a little of this visit as a whole. . . . . However incredible it may seem, there is here neither delicacy nor morals nor modesty in the true sense of the word.

In the small towns of France there is the fear of the confessor, of a grandmother, or of an old aunt whom one respects very much. . . . . Here, nothing. People often marry for love, and think nothing of elopement—and all this in cold blood. I think we leave to-morrow. I will stop at Kieff to have some masses said. I am tormented by the

darkest presentiments, and I am so frightened at all these omens! On Paul's birthday I found a taper at my place, forgotten there, it seems, by the man who lighted the lustres. And all those broken looking-glasses! So I ask myself if some evil is about to happen.

Friday, July 15th.—We are at Kharkoff. On the platform we find Micha and Lihopay; they started from Poltava before we did.

I cough and choke. I have just been looking at myself in the glass, expecting to see an appearance of disease; but no, nothing as yet. I am slim, but far from thin; and my bare shoulders have a fulness which does not agree with the cough and the noises I hear in my throat, nor with those in my ears that I no longer hear so loudly. . . . . The fact is that I have a cold, that is why I cough more. . . . . After all . . . . We went with mamma into a convent, and mamma knelt down with fervour before the painted image of the Virgin. How can one pray before an image? I firmly intended to do so, but I could not. But when I am at home, when the impulse comes, then I feel better afterwards, I swear to you, and I believe that God can cure me; and He alone. But before doing that He would have so many little things to forgive!

Saturday, July 16th.—This morning the fat Pacha arrived—my old lover; some wish to stay for a day, the others that we should all go on as far as Soumy, where we are at present The Pacha has got stouter, but he is still the same untamed creature, but not in the least terrifying. A prosaic dreamer with a rough exterior, and all this with a cold and very Philistine manner all the while. We only see one another at the station, where we meet Alexander just coming from Poltava, he has promised to go to Soumy on business; in fact, here we are—papa, mamma, Dina, Alexander, and myself,

the others remained behind; we parted, of course, with regrets, good wishes, and kisses.

Thursday, July 21*st.*—Here we are at Kieff, the holy town, "the mother of all the Russian towns," according to Saint Wladimir, who, having been baptised, afterwards baptised his people with or against their will, by making them get into the Dnieper; some of them must have been drowned, I think. But the idiots mourned for their idols, which were drowned when the men were baptised. There is still so much ignorance about Russia, where so much beauty and so much wealth remain unknown, that I may be telling you something new when I say that the Dnieper is one of the beautiful rivers of the world, and that its banks are exquisitely picturesque. Kieff is built irregularly, pell-mell, anyhow; there is the lower town and the upper town, with very steep streets. It is not comfortable, for the distances are enormous; but it is interesting. Nothing is left of the old town, for our civilisation at that period was satisfied with sorry churches, built without art or solidity; in consequence of which there are few or no monuments. If I were inclined to exaggerate, I might say that there are as many churches as houses. The cathedrals and convents are in considerable numbers, and, indeed, there are as many as three or four in a row, all with many gilt cupolas; the walls and pillars whitewashed or painted white, with cornices and green roofs. Often the whole front is painted with scenes from the lives of saints and images, but all perfectly simple.

We go first to the Laura, a convent to which the pilgrims come in thousands every day from all parts of Russia. The iconostasis or partition which separates the altar from the church, is covered with images, painted and covered with silver. The shrines and the doors, completely overlaid with silver, must represent pretty large sums, as well as the coffins of the saints, also covered with chased silver, with the candlesticks,

the lustres, and all the rest of it, all silver. It is asserted that these monks possess bags full of precious stones.

Anyhow, they are known to be as rich as the Rothschilds.

Peter the Great and Nicholas borrowed from them ten millions of roubles, which they never returned; and it serves them right. Your monks at least give to the poor, but ours here never give anything to anybody. And you cannot imagine what a quantity of money the pilgrims bring, even supposing that each pilgrim only gives a sou a day. And the masses which are ordered to be said, and the candles, of which a prodigious quantity is consumed.

And the images and the consecrated medals which are sold!

The great curiosities are the catacombs, very narrow and low subterranean places, damp and dark, of course. Each person goes in with a lighted taper. A monk leads the way, and quickly shows you the open coffins containing the bodies of the saints, bodies which have not decayed, but that are desiccated, and this they call the miracle.

Mamma prayed with unequalled fervour; I am quite sure that papa and Dina both prayed for me. But the miracle has not been accomplished. You laugh! Well, would you believe it, I almost trusted to it. I attach no importance to the churches, to the relics, to the masses; no, but I counted on the prayers, on my own prayer. I still hope to-day; I am not heard, but perhaps some day I may be. I believe only in God; but does God exist, the God who listens and thinks of things like these?

God will not cure me all of a sudden, in a church. No, I have not deserved such a thing as this, but he will have pity on me, and inspire some doctor, who will do me good. . . . Or, perhaps, in time . . . . but I will not cease to pray to Him.

Mamma believes in consecrated images, in relics. . . . In fact, she has a pagan religion . . . . like most pious and . . . . not very superior people. . . .

Perhaps the miracle might have been wrought if I had believed in the power of the images and relics! But there, really, kneeling and praying, it was no good; I can much better understand kneeling down anywhere, and praying to God simply. God is everywhere!

But, how believe?. . . . It even seems to me that this fetishism lowers God, and is a wrong towards Him. And to many people, to the majority of the pilgrims, God is quite effaced; it is nothing but a piece of dried flesh which possesses the power of working a miracle, or a wooden image which is to be invoked, and which hears you. . . . . Am I wrong? Are they right? The most enlightened must be in the right. . . . My own God must at least be opposed to . . . . all these masses which are said to be necessary to real faith. . . .

Paris, Tuesday, July 26th.—Here I am at last! It is life to be here. Amidst other calls, I looked in at the studio; I was received with acclamations and kisses. As I am very fond of the atelier, and particularly anxious to have Julian's friendship and help, I was afraid that he might receive me coldly, as I had broken a looking-glass, &c. Well, no; it's not from this side the trouble will come. Tony is well.

Wednesday, July 27th.—I went to Julian with the subject for a picture, which does not fascinate him; beyond this, he did nothing but talk of my health for two hours, without keeping back anything.

It seems that it is serious; it must be true, for two months of treatment have made no improvement. I know myself that it is serious, that I am ill, and that I am growing thin, while not believing such dreadful things. Breslau has received her honourable mention. She has some orders. Mme. ——, who protects her, and at whose house she made the acquaintance of the principal artists, has ordered her portrait for the next

Salon. She has already sold three or four things; in fact, she is launched. And I? I am in a consumption. Julian tries to frighten me in order to make me take care of myself. I should take care of myself if I had any hope. It is dismal at my age! Julian is quite right; in a year from this time I shall see how changed I am—that is to say, I shall be no more. I went to see Colignon to-day. She will die soon; how changed she is! Rosalie had warned me, but I was startled—death itself. And in the room a smell of very strong beef-tea which is given to sick people. It is horrible!

I have still got that smell in my nostrils. Poor Colignon! I took her some soft white silk for a dress and a kerchief. I was so fond of it that I hesitated for five months, and decided on making this immense sacrifice by meanly thinking that Heaven would repay it. These calculations take awav all merit.

Can you think of me as weak, thin, pale, dying, dead?

Is it not too horrible that it should be thus? But, at least, by dying young you inspire pity in all the world. I am touched myself when I think of my end. No, it seems impossible. Nice, fifteen years, the three Graces, Rome, the follies of Naples, painting, ambition, unheard of hopes, and to end in a coffin, without having had anything, not even love!

Well, I said so; one cannot live when one is like me, and when circumstances are as . . . those which have formed my life. To live would mean too much. And nevertheless, stranger and more fabulous fortunes are to be seen than the one I dreamed of.

Ah! whatever sorrow is felt, it contains a joy. I was right; the only horrible wounds are those of self-love, they contain nothing and are worse than death . . . But as for all the rest—God, death, hopeless love, separation!—they are life, for all that. I am on the point of crying; I even

think I am going to die, I am almost sure that I am weaker. Ah! I do not complain of that, but of my ears! And then there is Breslau, now she is another load. Everywhere repulsed with loss, beaten.

Well then, let it be death!

Tuesday, August 9th.—I went to the doctor's this morning; this is the third time in a fortnight. He makes me return so as to get a louis each time, for the treatment is always the same.

Really it is enough to drive one mad. They say that in a thousand such cases, only one will be followed by deafness, and that case must be mine! Every day are to be seen people suffering from the throat, and consumptive patients either suffering or dying, but they don't become deaf. Ah, it is such an unexpected and horrible blow!

What! was it not bad enough to lose my voice, to be ill, that this nameless torture should be added? It must be to punish me for having grumbled at trifles! Is it God who punishes? The God of pardon, of goodness, of mercy? Why the most spiteful of men would not be more inexorable! And I am tortured every instant. Blushing before my own people; feeling their kindness in speaking louder!

In the shops I tremble every minute, but that is not the worst; what tricks am I not obliged to use with my friends to hide my infirmity; oh, it is too cruel, too terrible, too awful!

Painting and the models! I do not always hear what they say to me, and I tremble lest they should speak. Do you think it does not affect my work? When Rosalie is there she helps me; when alone I am seized with giddiness and my tongue refuses to say, "Speak a little louder, I do not hear very well!" God have pity on me! and if I do not believe in God, it means dying at once in despair.

The lung was attacked after the throat, and the throat has affected my hearing. Now, nurse it! But I have always taken care of myself!

It was Dr. Krishaber who did the mischief, it was after his treatment that I . . . .

O God, must I be so cruelly separated from the rest of the world? and it is I, I, I! Oh! there are people to whom it would not be so painful, but . . . .

Oh! what a horrible thing!

Wednesday, August 10th.—I go to Passy every day, but as soon as I am settled, I become horrified at what I have commenced. First of all, there's Fortunata whom I dismissed, paying him for six sittings for nothing; next it is the picture I was wild about. Julian had said I was to modify and improve the composition, and that was enough to make me feel that I did not know what to do. At first, in spite of everything, I did commence it, but after beginning I got disgusted and frightened at it. The truth is that I have only twenty days left—and if it rains?

My picture is an election bill, before which there is a grocer's boy with his basket; a workman laughing at a man with a napkin under his arm; a stupid-looking masher with an enormous Bonapartist hat, of whom nothing is seen but . . . . the hat. In the background is a little woman. It is life-size, half length. In short, this and the rest drives me mad, my hand trembles as I write. No sooner have I an idea than I am disgusted with it. There was only this picture, and I have lost so many days, and here I am still undecided. Wretched character! when I am free to do as I like, I can do nothing. It is my disease making an idiot of me, and Breslau's honourable mention clips my wings. Heaven is just. I ask myself . . . . What of this picture, of which Julian and the others say that it is neither new nor original; agreed, but I don't know.

It is *real*, however, and then if it is well done it is sure to be good. I have still to learn if Alexis will be here in the course of the mouth of August; he sits for the masher, and without him, no picture, and I have not yet found the old man with the napkin. All this would be nothing if I were decided and in full swing. I am losing my time, and I spoil my eyes by reading to calm myself.

No means now of taking my hesitations to anybody on earth; Tony is in Switzerland, Julian at Marseilles, and I am desperate! As soon as I decide anything, a voice says to me . . . . After all, whatever I may do, it will always be to my own disadvantage. If I give up the picture some one else will do it, and I shall be mortally disgusted; if I do it, I shall go to work badly, it will rain, and I have already lost twenty days. All that I may do will certainly be the opposite of what ought to have been done, therefore I ought to give up caring for anything. And you see me. Ah! how dreadful it is to have come to this!

I have some white hairs; one day I found two in front, that is since I seem to be growing deaf . . . . Is not this horrible enough?

Oh, now . . . . at least it cuts my recriminations short; I have nothing the matter with me; granted, but I am no longer good for anything. Salon life, politics, intellectual pleasures, all these through a mist; and if I risk it, I also run the risk of covering myself with ridicule or of being thought either dull or commonplace. What an abrupt, eccentric, and absent manner I am obliged to affect to hide from Saint-Amand alone that I cannot hear well! It is enough to discourage forty horses. Is it possible to admit that you are deaf when you are young, elegant, and aspiring to everything? Is it possible to solicit indulgence and pity under these conditions?

Besides, what is the good of anything? My head splits,

I no longer know where I am! Oh no, there is no God such as I had imagined. There is a Supreme Being, there is Nature, there is, there is . . . . but not the God whom I have been in the habit of praying to every day. That he should grant me nothing, well and good, but to kill me in this manner! To make me more unhappy, more dependent on everybody than any beggar; and what have I done? I am not a saint, I do not pass my life in church, I do not fast; but you know my life. Except for my constant disrespect towards my family who do not deserve it, I have nothing to reproach myself with. What is the use of praying every night and asking pardon for being forced by circumstances to say hard things to my people? For if I am in the wrong towards mamma, you know very well that it is to force her to act.

However, I am now horribly stricken down — and stricken down with the most refined cruelty.

As to God—the God I used to believe I knew—does not exist. It is not possible! But then? Oh no! we must have a God, so as to be able to lay the good and the evil to somebody's account.

Friday, August 12th.—Perhaps you think I have decided upon something! I can do nothing! I feel the awful conviction of my own incapacity! It is over a month, counting the time lost in travelling, since I have done anything! I cannot even imagine that I am working. I am horrified beforehand with the untalented, dry and cold things that I may produce. It is odious! I can do nothing! And everything conspires against me! I give up the picture, and decide to paint Elstnitz, but she goes away in two days. Then I go to seek a model, whom I do not find. Then I run to Julia's, she can only begin to sit on Monday. I turn round to the little girl of the concierge, but she has three more days to be at school. So! . . .

Then I go to see Amanda, who is working in the courtyard of her house at Issy. It does me good, though she is not artist enough to put me into real spirits. Never mind, it is refreshing. . . I come in resolved to paint that damned picture.

Saturday, August 13th.—Well, I work at it for two hours, or hardly that, and then I wish you may get it! Who can tell? It might have been very good. Then I decide, but say to myself directly, "It is pretentious, and expresses nothing." Indeed, I do not like my models. Then I see the picture exposed on the Boulevard, just after the elections. And then it is so unfeminine a subject. But who can tell? Perhaps if I stick to it?—there is the perhaps, which drives me wild. Julian's opinion!—but Julian was wrong about Zilhardt this year; he had prophesied good, and it turned out to be a horror. I shall rely on fate, but if fate does not say the same as I do . . . and what do I say?

It is a misfortune, upon my word. I absolutely need Alexis for the picture, and I don't know when he will come back!—and I have only eighteen days!

Then you are mad!—Oh no, I have time enough!

Yes, fate! . . . Well, I open this book at random: I place my finger on it at random, and if the number of letters in the line on which my finger rests is even, I give up the picture. . . Good, *it is even!* But . . . You do not forget that my right lung is diseased. Well, you will be pleased, no doubt, to learn that the left lung is equally attacked. Not one of those idiots of doctors has told me so as yet; besides I only felt it for the first time in the catacomb of relics at Kieff. I thought it was a momentary pain, caused by the damp. Since then it comes back every day, and to-night so badly that I find it difficult to breathe, and I feel a real pain between

the collar-bone and the breast, just where the doctors make their little tapping.

And the picture?

Sunday, August 14th.—I got to sleep with difficulty, and this morning I am still in pain, but in the back also; and each time I breathe it is the very devil, and each time I cough it is two devils. Oh! how well I am! Yes, how well I am! Now it is decided I give up the picture. But how much time lost! More than a month.

As for Breslau, encouraged by her honourable mention, all must go smoothly; as for me, my wings are clipped, and I have lost confidence.

Thursday, August 18th.—To-day. . . do not read on if you want to be amused. I spent the day working, and telling myself *in petto* the most cruel truths the while.

I looked at my portfolios, and my progress can be followed step by step. Now and then I tell myself that Breslau painted before I could draw, . . but you will say that this girl is my whole world? I don't know, but it is no slight feeling which makes me fear this rivalry. From the very first day, and in spite of what the men and my fellow-students said, I discovered her talent; you see that I am right. The very thought of that girl makes me uncomfortable; a single stroke of hers on one of my drawings gave me a blow to the heart; I feel her to be a force against which I am breaking. She always compared herself with me. Only imagine, the nobodies of the studio always said she would never paint; "her colour is bad, she can't paint, she only knows how to draw." Just what is said of me. It ought to be a consolation, it is in fact the only one I have.

In 1876 (February) she already had the medal for a drawing. She had commenced in the month of June, 1875,

having already worked for two years in Switzerland. For two years I witnessed her struggle against the most signal failures in painting; but it came little by little, and in 1879 she exhibited by Tony's advice. I had been painting for six months at that time, in a month's time I shall have been painting for three years. Now the question is to know whether I am capable of doing anything like her exhibition picture of 1879? Julian said that the one she exhibited in 1879 was better than that of 1881; but, as they were not friendly, he did not press her forward towards success, but remained neutral.

Her picture of last year was placed, the same as mine, in the *morgue*, *i.e.*, the outer gallery. Now this year she is making it up with Julian, and is patronised besides by the new school, and placed on the line. The reward follows.

When I leave the studio my aunt and I go out in a fly to drive on the banks of the Seine, on the Trocadero side, through the avenues of Tourville. . . . What a delightful quarter, not well enough known! I feel tired, as Breslau used to feel. I think myself almost shrivelled as she is, and I admire the sky and the beauties of tone of the distance, as she did. But I howl, not from plagiarism, it comes of itself, and I flatter myself that it may bring me a little good painting. Breslau is constantly in my mind, and I do not make a stroke without wondering how she would do it, and how she would set to work on it. It means that the subject is nothing! nothing! nothing! the quality of the painting is everything, excepting where historical pictures are concerned. But now! and certainly they are quite right; a head, a hand, is enough if the painting is good; my work is dry! cold! and hard! . . . "I will take to sculpture," I said one day; and Julian added, "Rather dry in the modelling." This turns me cold.

But in sculpture it is impossible. You model as you see

things, there is no trickery, no colour, no optical illusion. . . . But why do these people—for instance, Tony—why do they persist in advising me to go on? Tony has no profit, nor, for the matter of that, Julian, for the time has come when I shall work much more at home than I do with him.

Occupied with my painting, I said nothing of the departure of Elstnitz. She has been wishing to go for a long time, but has always been kept on; but the poor child is done up, and bored to death. Only think, I say "Good-morning!" and "Good-night!" and every night I reproach myself for not having talked more, and every day it is the same again. I have had a hundred and fifty generous impulses to be more friendly to her, but there I stopped, and I find my excuse in the sorrows which crush me.

She has gone, the poor little thing, really an angelic nature. And this departure wrung my heart very much; but she will be happier over there. What I am particularly sorry for, is that I can no longer make any reparation for my coldness and indifference; I treated her as I do mamma, my aunt, Dina, but it is less painful to my own people: while this child—a stranger, alone, so gentle, and so calm! She left yesterday at nine o'clock. I could not speak for fear of crying, and I affected a careless look, but I hope she may have seen.

Saturday, August 20th.—I have been alone to see Falguière, the sculptor. I told him that I was an American, and showed him some drawings, also expressing my wish to work. He thought one of them very good indeed, all the others good. He sent me to a studio in which he gives advice, and further, if it was not satisfactory, he placed himself at my disposal, either for me to take him my work, or for him to come to me. That is kind; but for that purpose I have Saint-Marceaux, whom I adore, and I shall be satisfied with the studio.

Biarritz, Friday, September 16*th*.—Having said "Good-bye," we started on Thursday morning; we were to have spent the night at Bayonne, but we preferred to go to Bordeaux, where Sarah was playing; so we had two balcony stalls for fifty francs, and I saw *La Dame aux Camélias.* Unfortunately, I was very tired. This woman has been so much talked of, that I cannot quite realise what were my impressions. I imagined beforehand that she would not do anything like anybody else, so I was surprised to see her walk and talk and sit down. I have only seen her four times—once, when I was little, in the *Sphinx;* then lately, again in the *Sphinx;* and in *L'Etrangère.* Extraordinary attention is paid to her slightest movements. In fact, I don't know, I think she is ravishing.

It is quite certain that Biarritz is beautiful! beautiful!. . .

The sea has been of a lovely colour all day.

Such fine greys!. . . .

Saturday, September 17*th*.—So far, none of those supreme elegances which I dreamed of seeing at Biarritz. As to the beach, from the artistic point of view, it is disagreeable and ugly.

Oh bay of Nice! Oh gulf of Naples! and even the little beaches around Nice, Eses, Beaulieu, &c. Here you are teased by a lot of little rocks, thrown about anyhow; they look like cardboard decorations, placed there on purpose. The beach is small; on the right is a lighthouse, on the left a rock; and, beyond these, are two ramparts and enormous deserted beaches.

The view is wild, without being picturesque; there is not a house really on the edge of the sea; you have to go up and down and up again, all the time . . . I have been exploring the neighbourhood for two hours in a carriage, and I have not found the shadow of a subject, not a fisherman, not a boat, only fir-trees and villas and high-roads.

It would be better to go to Spain; I should see the museums, I could take some copies, and perhaps I might find a picture to paint—in any case, some studies. Yes, to spend a month or six weeks with hardly any luggage, quiet and unknown.

Sunday, September 18th.—I have some short cambric and white woollen gowns without any trimming, but charmingly fresh and smart; some very pretty cloth shoes which I bought here, and white hats—young-looking hats appropriate to happy women. They form a very noticeable whole.

And in my state of mind this is perfectly maddening. Mamma and my aunt are neither lively nor gay. In fact, it is quite the reverse of a pleasure trip to an elegant seaside place.

I cannot, however, resign myself to remaining shut up in Paris, for I shall never go into any society but the highest, and the silence and solitude of the studio is, after all, the greatest happiness.

Tuesday, September 27th.—Yesterday, at Bayonne, a family party; to-day, at Fontarabia, with the family, too; I never go out without them. I wanted to go on horseback, but the bodice of my habit fits so badly, and it would be tiresome to ride with a Russian whom I do not know well, and who is dull. Fontarabia is charming; whereas Biarritz is so common, so clumsy in its very commonplace beauty, that you are glad to get away from it. And just opposite, near the little harbour, are some beggar children, who would do very nicely for a picture; but I want to see Spain first, and if I do not meet with anything better there, I shall return by Fontarabia.

There was a roulette, so I played; but having lost forty francs, made sketches instead. It's a little corner at the

world's end, so I hope nobody saw me gambling. Fancy a three hours' drive listening to Mme. R——! This lady talked commonplaces, which had not even the charm of ordinary society chatter. Heavens, what have I done to be like this?

Why can't I eat the bad cookery at the hotel, which even royal princesses eat? Why can't I endure the intellectual penury by which I am surrounded? I have doubtless only what I deserve; and, in short, if I were really such a superior person, I should find a means . . . . Ah, deadly dulness!

Oh dreams of my childhood! Oh divine hopes!

If there is a God, He has forsaken me. I am only at peace in Paris; in travelling I am constantly thrown with my family, and it irritates me. Not that my mothers are vulgar, or wanting in manners; when there are no strangers, they are very nice, and then they are my mothers. But with strangers mamma poses and affects a certain kind of pronunciation, which exasperates me.

It is partly my fault. I have always reproached them with not having succeeded in making their way in society, and I sometimes say disagreeable things to spur them on to do something. But the only result is to give them this pitiful attitude. I am always complaining of my people; but I love them; I am just.

Madrid, Sunday, October 2nd.—You seem to wake from a dream on leaving this infamous butchery. A bull fight! An abominable slaughter of old hacks and cows, where men appear to be running no risks and play an ignoble part. Indeed, the only times I felt interested was to see the men rolling in the dust. One of them was trampled on by the bull; his escape was quite miraculous, and he had an ovation in consequence.

People throw cigars and hats, which are thrown back

unutterable things while talking on other subjects; and if I protest they say that I am trying to pick a quarrel. And yet I had not insisted on coming; they themselves proposed our going to Spain.

Well then, Burgos. . . . . Oh! they are unbearable; when not sorrowfully resigned or giving vent to complaints in the third person, they show a complete indifference that is really astounding.

All the same I made a rough sketch in the Cathedral. . . . Is it possible to describe it? A mass of ornamentation; of tinted sculptures, of gilding, of fioritura and gew-gaw devices which produce an imposing whole.

Ah! those dim chapels, those tall gratings—really it is a marvel; especially this stamp of religious romanticism; these churches suggest rendezvous; while dipping their fingers in holy water people look round for some one to ogle. This applies also to the comparatively modest convent of La Cartuja. We go there in the evening, which emphasises still more the poetry of Spanish churches; at the Cathedral they show that famous Magdalen of Leonardo da Vinci (?) Horror! I must confess that I find it ugly, and it says nothing to me, which for that matter is also the case with the Raphaels.

We are in Madrid at last, since yesterday morning. At the Museum this morning. Ah! the Louvre fades by comparison; Rubens, Philippe de Champagne . . . with Vandyck and the Italians. Nothing can be compared to Velasquez; but I am still too dazzled to judge. And Ribera! Oh, heavens! They are the true naturalists!

Is it possible to see anything more true, more admirably true! Ah! how stirring it is, how unhappy it makes you to see such things! How one would like to have genius! And they dare compare the colourless Raphael and the painting of the French School.

Colour! To feel colour and not to be able to produce

it, is surely impossible! Soria came before dinner with his friend, M. Pollack (a railway director), and his son, who is a painter; he has worked at Julian's.

I shall go to the Museum alone to-morrow. For nothing is more painful than to hear silly remarks while looking at masterpieces. It hurts one like being cut with a knife, yet to get angry looks foolish. And in fact I feel a certain delicacy which is not easily explained; I can't bear being seen admiring anything, or to be discovered under the impression of a genuine emotion; it is difficult to explain.

It seems to me that we can only speak seriously of something that has thrilled us with some one who completely shares our ideas. . . . One can talk well with . . . Yes, I can talk well with Julian, who is not a fool, but there is always a touch of exaggeration in order to give a ridiculous turn to your enthusiasm so as to protect you from sarcasm, however slight it may be. But to have had a deep impression made upon you, and express it simply and seriously as I have felt it . . . I can't imagine myself doing so excepting to some one I loved completely . . . For supposing I could speak of it to an unsympathetic person, the link thus created would prove very awkward afterwards; it would be like having committed something wrong together.

Otherwise you must treat it in the Parisian style, and affect to talk shop, so as not to appear too poetical in speaking of the artistic side, using words which prove it to be something exquisite, but are slang of the Boulevard: *delicacies*, *subtleties*, and then you'd say "that is *strong*, that's simply the most *stunning* thing you can see. . . ."

Tuesday, October 4th.—But wait, let us have done with yesterday. From the Buen Retiro we go to a café to hear a species of gipsies sing, and to see them dance.

It is very strange indeed; a man twanging a guitar and a dozen women beating time with their hands; then all at

once one of them begins to give utterance to certain notes, the chromatic scale all topsy-turvy: it is impossible to describe. In fact it's thoroughly Arabian; after an hour you have had quite enough of it. These women are in dressing-gowns with kerchiefs on their shoulders and flowers in their hair, and these muslin or even cotton gowns hide the movements of the hips, which are always so characteristic. All Spanish women are good to paint, if not pretty. Such complexions, such eyes! Ah! you understand Spanish painting after seeing them, they are . . . superb! What loaded lights, what unctuous touches, what breadth, what colouring!

Since nine o'clock this morning I have been at the Museum with Velasquez, beside whom everything looks dry and colourless, excepting Ribera, who doesn't come up to him, however. In the portrait of an unknown sculptor there is a hand! . . . It's the key to all the technique of Carolus Duran, who, as you know, wants to re-edit Velasquez.

We have bought a guitar and a Spanish mandoline . . . Impossible to imagine Spain . . . And I am told that Madrid is less characteristic than what I am going to see, Granada, Toledo, Seville . . . In short, I am enchanted to be here, I am in a fever till I have tried my hand at some sketch in the Museum, then to paint a picture after that, and I will stop here two months if necessary.

Thursday, October 6th.—I have copied the hand by Velasquez; I was modestly dressed in black with a mantilla like all the women here, but I have been much looked at, especially by one man. It seems they are worse in Madrid than in Italy; they promenade under the windows with guitars; they follow you everywhere, talking all the time, and persistently. Notes are exchanged in the churches, and young girls have five or six admirers; they are extremely gallant to women, and their attentions have nothing insulting; for the demi-monde, in the French sense of the word,

does not exist; these sort of women are thoroughly despised; but men tell you quite frankly in the street that you are pretty, and that they adore you; they ask permission to accompany you, quite respectfully, knowing you are a lady.

You may see men throwing down their cloaks for you to walk over. For my part, I think it enchanting. When I go out, very simply but tastefully dressed, they stop to look at me, and I revive—it's a new and romantic existence, tinged with the chivalry of the middle ages.

Sunday, October 9th. — Well, there's nothing new. Pollack and Escobar have come every day. Mamma was leaving for Russia, and their presence has spared us many tears. I have been very sad since the morning—and yet it must be; she must go, as my father wants to see her on business. Now she is gone.

We pass the evening talking art with Pollack, and now that I am alone I imagine all kinds of dreadful things. If mamma were to die without seeing us again!

Oh, if it were to happen it would be a punishment for my idiotic filial revolts.

I should pass my life in weeping at not being able to wipe out my harshness. . . Just think, to feel yourself guilty, and never, never to be able to repair your folly!

And she would die thinking I did not love her—that it is all the same to me, that I am comforting myself, nay, perhaps even that I am happy!

I expect all kinds of misfortunes, but I can't imagine how I should bear this one. . . Better anything in the world than this . . . become blind, paralysed. . . . It would be pitiable: but if I were to lose mamma under the present circumstances, it would seem to me that I had killed her.

Monday, October 10th.—While I was working at the

Museum, two men, rather old, and not very good-looking, approached me, and asked "if I was not Mlle. Bashkirtseff." "Certainly." Then they were all excitement. M. Soldatenkoff is a millionaire from Moscow—a great traveller, who adores art and artists. Then Pollack tells us that Madrazo, the son of the director of the Museum, and himself an artist, has liked my copy very much, and wished to make my acquaintance. Old Soldatenkoff asked me if I sold my things, and I foolishly said no.

As regards painting, I am on the way to learn a great deal—I see things I didn't see. My eyes are opened, and I stand on tiptoe, hardly daring to breathe, lest the enchantment should be dispelled, for it is genuine enchantment. I seem to touch my dreams at last — I seem to understand what requires to be done. All my faculties are straining towards the one awe-inspiring aim—a fine piece of painting —not house-painter's work . . . but real flesh—living tones, . . . and when you have done that, and are an artist, you may do admirable things. For the execution is everything! Take *Vulcan's Forge*, by Velasquez, or his *Filandières!* Take away the prodigious painting from these pictures, and what but a commonplace sort of person remains—no matter who. Many people, I know, will protest—idiots, who pretend to adore sentiment. . . But the *sentiment*, don't you see, is in the workmanship, in the poetry of the execution, in the charm of the brush. You don't realise to what an extent this is so! Do you like the early masters, with their thin and naïve forms, and their smooth painting? It's curious and interesting, but you can't care for that! Do you love the sublime pasteboard Madonnas of Raphael? You will think me coarse, but I must say, it doesn't touch me. . . I own that they have a nobility of sentiment which I respect, but can't love. Now *The School of Athens*, also by Raphael, is truly admirable, and incomparable, like some other of his compo-

sitions, especially in engravings or photographs. And in these you really get the thought, the feeling, the inspiration of genius. Mark you, I am quite as much against the ignoble flesh painting of Rubens, and the magnificent, but stupid, flesh painting of Titian. You want mind and matter; you want, in short, to be a poet in your execution and a thinker in your composition, like Velasquez.

Tuesday, October 12th.—I dreamt that somebody explained to me what was the matter with my right lung. The air does not penetrate to certain parts . . . but it is too disgusting to relate. The disease has attacked me, that's enough. Ah, I know it! for during some time past I feel a certain discomfort—an indefinable kind of weakness. But I am not as I used to be—I feel something different from others. I am enveloped by a weakening sort of vapour, figuratively speaking, of course. There's something queer the matter with my chest, and I have . . . But why write these absurdities? We shall see.

Wednesday, October 13th.—I have always hated Paris physically, always, always! Madrid is much more sympathetic, in spite of its irregular streets and poverty-stricken look, when compared with Paris. Look at Paris! its elegance is wearisome; its shops, its cocottes, its bran-new houses, are all dreadfully anti-artistic. Oh Rome! (and Madrid is a little like it). Oh the South! I come from the South; I was born in the Ukraine, and grew up in Nice. I adore the South.

I have finished my copy of *Vulcan*, by Velasquez, and it must be good, if I can judge by the public. Those poor devils who make reduced copies of famous pictures for sale come several times in the course of the day to see me paint; so do the lads from the Fine Arts School, as well as foreigners,

several of whom, speaking in English, French, or Spanish, have said the most flattering things of me.

And when I leave, they go up the ladder to look at my big brushes, and to see what the painting is like. In a word, my dear children, it would be enough to turn a person's head if she were less ambitious.

Friday, October 14th.—Yesterday, at seven o'clock in the morning, we started for Toledo. I had heard so much in its praise that I hardly know what I expected; in spite of common sense, I kept imagining a marvel of mediæval and renaissance art, wonderful specimens of architecture, sculptured gates blackened by time, balconies of divine workmanship, &c.

I knew that it was quite different in reality, but it had taken possession of my fancy, and spoilt Toledo when I found it to be a Moorish town with its invariably thin walls and notched, or apparently notched, gates. Toledo lies quite high like a citadel, and when you look down from the summit on the landscape and the Tagus, it reminds one of some of those rural-looking backgrounds of Leonardo da Vinci, or even Velasquez—those mountains of a bluish-green, looking like a bird's eye view seen through a window, near to which is a lady or a gentleman in plum-coloured velvet, with beautifully-shaped hands.

As for Toledo itself, it is a labyrinth of irregular little streets, so narrow that the sun cannot reach them, in which the inhabitants seem to be camping, owing to the queer look of the houses; it is a mummy; a Pompeii in complete preservation, but looking as if it were about to crumble into the dust of old age, with its scorched soil and high walls baked by the sun. There are courtyards of astonishing picturesqueness; mosques turned into churches, and daubed over with whitewash; which, however, is scraped off little by little, revealing very curious designs and arabesques

still brilliant in colour, ceilings of blackened rafters, or beams curiously interlaced right at the top. The cathedral is, of course, admirable, with a profusion of ornament, like that of Burgos. Oh! the gates are marvels; and then there are the cloisters, with the courtyard filled with oleanders and rose-trees pushing through the galleries and climbing up the pillars with their thin, sad, grave-looking statues! And if a sunbeam penetrates this interior, the poetry of it is incomparable.

Indeed, the Spanish churches are something that can't be imagined. The tattered guides, the sextons dressed in velvet, the foreigners and dogs, who walk about, praying and barking, &c., possess a peculiar charm. On coming out of one of these chapels, you would suddenly like to meet the idol of your soul behind one of these pillars.

It seems incredible that a country so near the centre of European corruption should still be so fresh, so wild and untouched.

At Toledo one seems to be out of the world. . . . I don't know, there are too many things to be seen, and I only stayed a few hours. . . . But I mean to return and paint some of those very black little streets . . . . and those colonnades, pillars, antique gateways with their big Spanish and Moorish nails. What gems, what marvels! But it was very hot, I couldn't see much. It is intensely picturesque; everything turns to a picture; you need not even choose, for everything is strange and interesting. But it does not appeal to me. . . . Perhaps if I were to look at it better? . . . . It is this mixture of Goth, Arab, and Spaniard; well, that doesn't concern me. The *Coro* of the cathedral is really wonderful; the pews of the chancel, for example, are covered with historical bas-reliefs, and sculptured wood wrought with such detail and finish that you are filled with admiration. But I told you that the elegance, wealth of ornamentation, and airy lightness of this

cathedral are astonishing. It seems as if colonnades, carvings, and arches, could not withstand the wear and tear of time, you fear to see such treasures falling into ruin; it is so beautiful that it fills you with a personal kind of dread, but for the last four or five centuries this prodigy of patience has stood there unshaken and admirable. As I say, the thought that haunts you on coming away is, if it will only last! And you tremble at the idea of its being spoilt, destroyed, worn out. I wish no one were allowed to touch this creation with a finger; even the people who walk about in it are, to some extent, guilty, for they must be adding to the very gradual but inevitable destruction of this marvellous building. Doubtless for centuries to come, it will still remain, but . . . . And then, on coming out, there are the lofty battlemented walls with Arab windows, cracked and dried by the sun; the mosques, with their grandiose succession of pillars with arabesque ornaments. But go to Rome to see the sun setting behind the Cupola, and all these astonishing gew-gaws and wonders of sculptured stone, of Gothic and Arab gates, all these delicate and brittle marvels imparting a sense of pride and uneasiness, yes, they will all fall like scales before it, and look puerile in comparison.

I am looking at the photographs of Toledo, it seems to me that I am mistaken, and that I have not seen it properly.

Saturday, October 15th.—I have passed the day at the Escurial with my aunt, whom it bored, and who, looking quite unconcerned all the time, tried to cheat me. Had I not heard the guide, she would have tricked me out of the vaults . . . in order not to tire me, "and then the coffins, how dreadful." What a nuisance to travel in this way! As in a dream did I see this immense block of granite—so sombre, sad, and imposing. As for me, I think it magnificent; this majestic

sadness has a charm of its own. The palace has been built in imitation of the grating of St. Lawrence (see the guide books), which imparts to it something of the look of barracks, if you will excuse the expression. But its granite walls, of the thickness of a Parisian house—its cloisters, colonnades, galleries, terraces, court-yards, and sheet of green water, produce a deep impression, seen rising above a parched and sombre plain, which is undulated like the sea. It is cold, they say—cold and sad; may-be, but it is soothing after the perplexing visions of Toledo! We went to the royal suites of rooms, rather loud and ugly . . .; the king's own room, however, is a gem; such doors of inlaid wood with ornaments of polished iron and pure gold. . .; then a delicious oratory in embroidered silk! What a contrast to Philip the Second's room! This tyrant dwelt in a bare, miserable cell, leading into a kind of low chapel of marble, which in its turn led into the church. He could see the altar and hear mass from his bed. I cannot altogether remember all the rooms, cloisters, and staircases, we visited, it is so huge. Then those long galleries with immense windows, whose wooden shutters were fastened with locks, and massive doors with but little ornament on them.

The church is admirably simple, the bare grand arches producing a very imposing effect.

The royal vault and the staircases leading to it, all of variegated marble, are very sumptuous.

The coffins are of solid marble with ornaments in repoussé copper. It is splendid. There are only five places left. The touching figure of Mercedes is waiting in a little side chapel till the vault of the infantas and childless queens shall be rebuilt.

The Coro consists of uncarved wood, but in the centre stands a marvellous chorister's desk with books as big as myself.

Oh, and as for the library there are manuscripts which I stood admiring for a long time, although I don't understand much about them.

And would you have me prefer little delicate prettinesses to this gloomy majesty? What character, what sobriety, is here. How far removed from the indescribable load of profuse ornamentation and the tiresome affectations of Toledo!

After this you are shown into the park where the king goes rabbit shooting, and into the Pavilion, built in 1781, I believe—a gem. Stairs and porch are of coloured marble; there are a number of little salons hung all over with pictures, very fine pictures too, and with pale, deliciously faded silk, covered with exquisite embroidery, blue flowers and roses; the greens with their harmoniously-faded tints stand out delicately on the white background of an incomparable ivory tone.

These little salons of dim white or pale blue and faint gold satin, with exquisitely painted or inlaid ceilings, are enough to turn one's head.

There is a little room hung with pictures worked in tapestry; they look like paintings a few steps off. And what miracles of ivory work and porcelain!

Sunday, October 16th.—One of the chief curiosities here is the *Rastro*, a street lined with stalls of all kinds, as at fairs in Russian villages, where you find something of everything. And such a stir, excitement, and swarm of life beneath this burning sky. It is admirable. What a wealth of precious *bric-à-brac* is to be found in filthy dens, in back shops, and legendary staircases; heaps of stuffs, tapestries, and embroideries enough to drive you crazy!

And these wretches seem utterly unconscious of it; they pierce these splendid stuffs with nails in order to hang up some old frames; they walk over the embroideries lying

pell-mell on the floor with old furniture, sculpture, picture-frames, relics, plate, and old rusty nails. . . . I bought a curtain of salmon-coloured silk, covered with embroideries, for which they asked seven hundred francs, and which I got for one hundred and fifty; and a linen skirt embroidered with pale flowers, very pretty in tone, which they let me have for five francs, after asking twenty.

How unfortunate not to have one hundred thousand francs to spend; I could furnish a studio with only one hundred thousand francs! What a lot one could buy.

Escobar came to escort us to the bull-fight. We are in a box with his father, Mme. Martinez, two other persons, and Escobar. I wanted to go again to have a second impression. It had been announced that eight bulls would be there, and I believe it is to be the last Sunday. In short, a brilliant display. The king, queen, and infantas were in their places. We had sunshine, music, frantic shouting, stamping, hissing, waving of handkerchiefs, and hats flying about. It is a unique sight, like nothing else in the world, and the grandeur of which carries you away with it. I began to understand it, and became interested in the spectacle. I went there much against the grain, with a shudder of disgust. I kept my countenance, however, before this butchery, with its refinements of cruelty. . . . It is very fine, provided you see nothing. . . . But you end by getting interested, and in face of these ignominies, keep up your courage from sheer pride. I looked on all the time. On leaving the place you feel a little drunk with blood, and feeling as if you would like to stick a dart into everybody you met.

I cut up the melon at table as if I were handling one of the little darts . . . . and it seemed as if my meat came freshly palpitating from the torn skin of the bull! Oh, it makes your flesh creep, and your head feel ironbound; it's a school for assassins. . . . At present these very men are no doubt behaving with perfect grace and elegance, and in

spite of their exceeding suppleness, they are full of ease and dignity.

People say that this duel of a man with an enormous beast is magnificent; but is it really a duel, when you know beforehand which of the two will be beaten? I quite admit the impressiveness of the matador's first appearance in his brilliant costume, so advantageously showing off his form, when, having made his three peculiar bows, he twists his arms three times above and three times in front of him, as with the utmost coolness he stands with his cloak and sword calmly confronting the animal. . . . This, in fact, is almost the best part of the game; hardly any blood is spilt. Yes, I admit it produces a startling impression. The Spaniards themselves, indeed, don't care for the introduction of the horses. Am I, then, reconciled to this savage pleasure? I don't say so; but it has a fine—nay, almost a grand—side to it. This circus, these fourteen or fifteen thousand spectators; it seems to give you a vision of those ancients I love so much. But there is the sanguinary, horrible, ignoble side. . . . If the men were not so clever—moreover, if they were more often seriously wounded—I would not complain; but it's the cowardice of the thing which shocks me. Yet they say you must be as brave as a lion. . . . Oh no; they are too clever, and too sure of avoiding the terrific but simple attacks of the beast, provoked and foreseen by them. . . . The real danger is incurred by the banderillos, for the man runs forward to meet the bull, and just when it prepares to toss him, he foils it by sticking his darts between its shoulders; to do this, you must possess exceptional courage and dexterity.

Monday, October 17th—Tuesday, October 18th.—What happy people there are, and I, who have everything to make me so, am far from happy! I have enough money to come and go, to paint and travel; *they do whatever I like.* You

know the rest. I would sooner be in want of money, and not do what I like, than be with people who drive me crazy with their obstinacy about what is *for my good.*

When people are convinced of doing right, there's nothing more to be done. My family are convinced. If they did not go in for killing me with kindness, may-be I should forgive them for their want of artistic taste and agreeableness. Ah, what happy people there are! No, but this journey with my aunt, you see! Well, we must go to Paris to-morrow. . . .

Wednesday, October 19*th.*—I can't deny that I may be seriously injured by the cough I have. At the same time I am getting thin. That is to say . . . Yes, to judge by my arms, I am getting thin. When I stretch one out, it has a stricken look—not the insolent fulness it used to have. It's even pretty, and I won't complain yet. At present I have reached the interesting stage of growing slender without being too thin, and a certain languishing air that's becoming; but if it continues, I shall end, in a year, by being a skeleton. . . .

Thursday, October 20*th.* — This morning I passed two hours at Cordova, just time to have a look at the city, which is enchanting . . . . in its way; indeed, I adore cities like this; there are delightful Roman remains, and a truly marvellous mosque.

How I should love to remain a month at Cordova! But to do so I should not be travelling with my aunt, who, in the course of ten minutes, manages to put me in a rage as many times by being in a rage herself to begin with; sometimes it is: "There's nothing to see, and the guide is taking us here on purpose to gain money, and make us lose our train." Then you must have a carriage to go to the mosque! At Cordova at eight o'clock in the

morning! Just think, one may catch cold, and I, who am dying, mustn't dream of walking; in short, she is furious. What sweet society, what delightful companionship for an artistic tour through Spain! As for me, I keep praying all the time that it may not hurt me; for it is too bad to see everything ruined in this fashion. But all the same I have no luck; it's enough to make you weep.

I take care of myself, and am fond of comfort, and like to eat well; but when I am bothered out of my life about it, I'd sooner be abandoned in the streets! . . . .

Good heavens, how these people bore me! . . . . As long as there was little Pollack, I escaped from these worries to some extent. . . . My poor aunt is always delighted, for that matter, when there's some one else, for she knows, poor woman, that she puts me in a rage.

Saturday, October 22nd.—Here we are in Seville, of which we have heard so much. I am losing a lot of time, it seems. I have seen the museum—a unique room, full of Murillos. I would prefer something else, for there are only Madonnas and other sanctities. As for me, who am a barbarian, coarse, ignorant, and presumptuous, I have never yet seen a Virgin such as I fancy she should be. Raphael's Madonnas make beautiful photographs. . . . But I will tell you my valuable opinion when I have seen that one again. I confess Murillo has no message for me with his round and rosy-cheeked Madonnas. There's the one at the Louvre, which has so often been copied; the artist has really felt her, and she may even be called divine.

Then there's the cigar and cigarette factory! What a smell! And if it were only tobacco! A pell-mell of women, with bare arms and necks, and young girls and children. This swarm of human beings were for the most part pretty, and it's a curious sight. Spanish women have a grace you will find in no other women. You see café-singers, cigarette-

makers, with the carriage of queens, and an incomparable suppleness and grace. And then the setting of the throat, and the rounded arms, so pure in form and magnificent in tone. What splendid and astonishing creatures!

There was one especially, who rose to get some tobacco-leaves, with the walk of a queen, the suppleness of a cat, and a divine grace; she had a splendid head, a dazzling complexion, with arms and eyes, and oh, a smile! . . . .

Not to mention those who are only *chic.* The little girls are all funny and delightful; there are some ugly ones, but very few. And even the ugly ones have a something.

I must try and give an account of my time; I am getting muddled.

I have seen the cathedral, which is one of the finest in the world to my mind, and one of the largest; then the Alcazar, with its delicious gardens and baths for Sultanas; afterwards we went for a walk through the streets. I am not exaggerating when I say that we were the only women with hats, and I attribute the amazement of the populace entirely to our hats.

I was not even elegantly dressed, for I wore a grey woollen skirt, a tight-fitting black jacket, and a black hat, suitable for travelling. But strangers are stared at here like learned monkeys; people stop them, hoot them, or else make some amiable remark.

The children jeer at me, but the grown-up tell me I am pretty and piquante; as you know, it is quite the thing to be *salada.*

Seville is so white, oh, so white; the streets are narrow, no carriages can pass through most of them; and yet it isn't as picturesque as it might be. . . . Ah! Toledo, I see now what a barbarian I was!

Toledo is truly a wonder. Seville with its low, white-

washed houses, is rather *bourgeois* in character. Of course there are the low quarters . . . but in all the countries in the world the low quarters are the interesting ones; there you find such harmony and depth of tone, that you would wish to paint everything you see.

I feel very irritated at not speaking Spanish; it's a dreadful hindrance, especially when you wish to work and make sketches. . . .

Those half savage women and children in their rags are tremendous in colour. It is enchanting, in spite of the crude, white look of the houses. But the rain continues, and I am with my family.

I quite see the happiness of living with one's family, and should be miserable alone. You can go shopping with your family, go to the Bois de Boulogne with them, and sometimes to the theatre; you can be ill with your family, you can try cures with them; in short, share with them all the ordinary and domestic things of life. Oh, but to travel with your family! It's just like waltzing with one's aunt, for the pleasure of the thing! It is deadly dull, and even borders on the ridiculous.

I made a study of a beggar yesterday, in four or five hours—life-size head. It is necessary to try one's hand at these rapid sketches from time to time, to get facility.

I seem to be in exile; the days are so long under this grey sky; and as I sleep but little, owing to the mosquitoes, I feel depressed, and not fit for work.

I expected a lot of amusing adventures in Seville, but am so bored that I remain shut up in the hotel; and it rains.

No love, no poetry, not even youth. Nothing; really there's nothing in my life at Seville. I feel buried alive, as in Russia, this summer. What are all these journeys for? And what of my painting? . . . I have not been to the studio now for five months; out of these five months I have

lost three—I, who need study so much! . . . The mention of Breslau's name has called up a host of thoughts in me, or has, so to speak, brought nearer and rendered possible that dream of a medal at the Salon, which hitherto has seemed such a far-off thing, that I pictured it in my castles in the air, as I dream of getting the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, or of becoming Queen of Spain. When Villevielle spoke to me of Breslau getting an honourable mention, she appeared to think that it annoyed me, and the fact that the others considered I might hope for some reward gave me the courage to think of it, or at least to say to myself, that since the others thought I might aspire to it, there must be some cause for their doing so. . . . In short, I have dreamt of it for the last five months.

This may seem a digression, but it all hangs together. That sketch I made at Lorenzo's may be turned into a picture.

Thursday, October 27th.—Oh, what bliss! I have left that horrid Seville.

I say "horrid" with all the more gusto, because I am at Granada since last evening. We have been out ever since this morning, and have seen the inevitable cathedral, the Généralife, and a portion of the gipsy vaults. I am quite enthusiastic. At Biarritz and at Seville I felt good for nothing; everything seemed done with and dead. During the three hours I passed at Cordova I had the impression of an artistic city—I mean I could have worked there with great zest. There's only one objection to Granada, that is, that I can't remain six months or a year in it. There's so much to see, that I don't know which way to turn—such streets, such outlines, such views!

It turns you into a landscape painter; but, then, behold such strange and interesting types, so dazzling in colour and harmonious in tone.

But the most curious thing I saw is the prison of Granada, where the convicts are at work. I don't know how I came to think of going, but I certainly don't regret it, although, on leaving, I felt the same pressure of the temples that I did after the bull-fight. The commandant of the prison gratified the wish of the distinguished foreigners at once, and we were shown everything. A gaoler walked in front of us, and we had an escort of six corporals, the pick of the criminals, armed with sticks, and charged with keeping order. It would be impossible to describe the impression made upon me by this band of men, placing themselves in a row, and saluting with a rapidity akin to fear before the epaulets and staves of the gaolers. They are flogged, so the guide tells me.

In seeing these men disarmed, imprisoned, forced to labour like children, I can only feel pity instead of thinking of the misdeeds and crimes which brought them there. I must go farther, and say that I even feel moved, strangely moved, confronted by this crowd of miserable wretches who salute so humbly, who seem to work so zealously, and show us the books from which they are taught to read in such a timid and childish manner.

Yes, you can see that they are flogged: they look like those poor dogs in the streets who crouch down submissively to be beaten.

But what heads one sees! I should like to paint a picture there. . . . They have given me the permission, and if I can find some corner with three or four of them. . . . Unfortunately it would lead to my painting too large a picture. . . .

I recommend you to pay this gloomy visit before going to see the Généralife, the gardens of which must surely be a branch of paradise. How shall I describe this tangle of oleanders, of orange-trees, and all kinds of the most luxuriant and exquisite plants; these cypress avenues and creviced

Arabian walls crowned with roses, these little streams between beds of violets? . . . Go to the convicts and then to the Généralife.

The Alhambra is for to-morrow, as well as the head of a convict I mean to paint.

Friday, October 28th.—This day has been passed in the prisons of Granada. The prisoners enjoy a delightful amount of freedom; the yard is like a market-place, the doors don't seem to shut very tightly, and in short, this gaol does not resemble in the least the description of those kind of places in France.

My poor devil of a convict sat very well all day; but as I have done the head life-size, and sketched the hands in a day (oh! sublime genius), I have not been as successful as usual in rendering the surprisingly ambiguous character of the individual. And I am wrong to lay the blame to my want of time, for if I am not more satisfied it is because the light changed several times, and also because those good convicts would stand just behind me, a dozen at a time; they took it in turns, but they were always there; their eyes, though I could not see them, irritated me. The excellent deputy-governor, in whose room I was at work, had placed chairs for his friends as at a show, and they came and sat behind me in succession all day long. And not an instant passed without some one knocking at the door; some of them were prisoners—the harmless ones—corporals who begged leave to come in, and who came in. The interpreter and Rosalie remained all the time, and thus I heard that a man who has assassinated his wife is to be publicly strangled next week, that one man is imprisoned because he refused to uncover himself during a procession, and some other equally astonishing things.

Have you noticed that when any one says, as I did just now: *other astonishing things*, or *and other even better ones;*

or, again, *but what I've been saying is nothing compared to so-and-so,* it really means that so far from having left the worst unsaid, there is nothing more to say, but that you want to clinch the statement by something still more remarkable. For example, you may have heard people add, after having said the very worst they could think of, "Moreover, this is only his ordinary conduct; so you can judge of his big offences." But not to forget my convict. I had given him credit for the most dreadful crimes, and, it seems, he has done nothing worse than utter some forged bank-notes. But his head looks fit for any crime; so I mean to invent a nice little story about him to tell in Paris. The balcony of the window faced the court-yard, and all these poor devils looked at the model, the easel, and the painter, with Spanish eagerness. When I was leaving they ran towards me like famished dogs, and their expression their clasped hands, their exclamations, were a study as they looked at the portrait of their comrade.

As I was crossing the threshold, the deputy-governor very kindly showed the canvas to all the people on tip-toe in the yard to catch a glimpse, and then he took it to the Governor and to the Commandant, who came out in the street and bowed as I got in the carriage. And after once more assuring me that they would see me again with pleasure I was at last able to go for a drive with my aunt.

I wrote in one corner of the canvas: "Antonio Lopez, condemned to death, 1881, October," for forgery and murder. Poor fellow! At any rate, I slander him under a pseudonym, and for aught I know his name may be Roderigo, or Perez, or perhaps Lopez. I have depicted him with his knitting, for most of these amiable citizens—that is, all those who are not engaged as carpenters, smiths, and shoemakers, &c. &c.—may be seen knitting stockings like good housewives.

The men who were condemned to death walked about the courtyard just as freely as those who had only been

guilty of trifling misdeeds and were imprisoned for a year or two.

Many of these gentlemen prefer home-cooked food to that of the establishment, and their charming consorts bring them delicious dinners which Coco would certainly not touch—Coco surnamed the assassin, no one knows why: perhaps because, whenever his colleagues behaved to me as Francis I. did to Titian, he jumped on them without barking to make sure of his bite.

Saturday, October 29th.—At last I have seen the Alhambra; I purposely avoided staying long in this most beautiful place, partly in order not to get too fond of Granada, and partly because the guide who took us about spoilt my artistic enjoyment by his presence. But I hope to see it all again.

The beauty of Granada seen from the tower is admirable, perfect. The mountains covered with snow, the gigantic trees, the exquisite flowers and shrubs, the pure sky, and Granada itself with its white houses basking in the sunshine in the midst of all these natural beauties, the Moorish walls, the towers of the Généralife, and then the Alhambra! . . . And the vast horizon afar looking like the sea; indeed, only the sea is wanting to make this the loveliest country in the world. The palace itself is fantastic in its beauty.

The Moorish dress is unquestionably the most picturesque in existence. There is nothing to compare with the haughty elegance of these superb draperies. I am under the spell of the late Boabdil and his Moors whom I imagine walking about in this unique palace.

In the afternoon I make a sketch in a little street, and when I have done I write on the wall: "Andrey has worked here, 1881." But the shadow on the right hand side of the sketch is too warm in tone, which detracts from the brightness of the light, and grieves me. Do

you know it is quite cold, and my fingers were so numb that I had to go and warm them in the sun? This does not encourage me to remain here, as I could not work in the open air. Indeed, why martyrise myself here, be cruelly bored in the evenings, and not able to sleep on those infamously hard beds, with nothing to eat in the day but a plate of soup and a slice of meat, with a cup of coffee in the morning? But I should have liked to take one good study back with me. . . .

Sunday, October 30th.—I have spent the whole day with the gipsies and yet done nothing at all. It's icily cold, and my face has felt frozen, while the canvas was covered with dust and sand; in short, I've done nothing. But what an inexhaustible mine for artists this is! One ought to remain a whole day to catch those attitudes, those groups, those effects of light and shade! For one thing the gipsies are very amiable to foreigners, because the Spaniards despise them. I ought to come here every day for two or three months to sketch, and what a lot would still have to be left undone. I am crazy about these gipsy types, there is such a natural yet strange kind of grace in their actions, movements, and attitudes. What marvellous pictures one could paint here. Your eyes *run away in all directions,* as they say in Russia; everything is a kind of picture. It is maddening to have come so late; but in spite of the utmost willingness it's impossible to work; the wind blowing from the snow-covered mountains is too cutting to endure. But oh how beautiful, how very beautiful, it is! When I had settled down to paint they came flocking round me, and grouped themselves about the natural steps of the mountain side; you can imagine how well it looked; and then their curiosity is so sympathetic, whereas the people who surrounded me the other day irritated me profoundly. The Spaniards are very idle, so that instead

of stopping to look at my work and passing on, a lot of them remain standing behind me for two or three hours. And, moreover, I was painting in quite a deserted street, and there are a great many painters here.

Granada is as artistic and picturesque as Seville is bourgeois, although it boasts a celebrated college. Almost all the streets of Granada, yes, almost all, are delightful for a painter.

You are dazzled and attracted in all directions. You might begin painting wherever you happen to stop, and it would make a picture.

I mean to come back here next year for August, September, and part of October.

Monday, October 31*st.*—I am glad the cold is driving me away, otherwise I would not go, and I ought to be returning now. It is five months since I saw Tony, and I must think of taking a studio, and painting my picture for the Salon without being worried, and in short do all I can. The first year didn't count. You know how little time I had last year, besides that, the subject was not my own. But this year I think I've got hold of something interesting.

I should like to do the *bric-à-brac* of Lorenzo with the staircase and a bright light behind, and a woman mending carpets on a kind of platform; in the foreground another woman sits huddled up cleaning some copper utensils, while a man with his hands in his pockets stands looking at her, smoking a cigar.

The women should be dressed in common calico dresses, which I would buy in Madrid just as they are worn. I possess nearly all the requisite clothes. There would still be the platform to put up; that would cost about a hundred francs. But I shall have to find a studio that's large enough. . . . This evening I am going away at last, and I can't help singing for joy.

My journey in Spain will have cured me of the habit of eating for the sake of eating, which takes up time and dulls the intellect. I have become as abstemious as an Arab, only taking what is strictly necessary, just enough to live upon.

The son-in-law of the gipsy chief, in whose house I have been painting, has just come from the galleys, where he was kept four years for having abducted a little girl of thirteen.

Wednesday, November 2nd.—Here we are again at Madrid, where I've been enjoying myself for a week, as I wanted three days in order *to re-touch the sketch of Lorenzo.*

After hearing me talk of nothing else and seeing me full of impatience to return to Madrid it was quite natural, was it not, that my aunt should come ready dressed to go out and say, "We are going to spend this day in shopping, are we not?" And when I tell her that I am going to paint she looks at me in perfect amazement, and says I must be mad.

You suddenly have an idea and think you have found a subject; you begin concentrating yourself, the dream takes shape, and you set about making a rough draft, quite absorbed in your work, cudgelling your brains to find some harmonious combinations, and just when you are on the point of seizing hold of something that is still rather vague and shapeless and may escape you before you have had time to get it more clearly defined . . . . just then my dear relations who love me so much, and are so alarmed when I cough, appear on the scene. And yet I am not inordinately sensitive; I think myself very practical compared to other artists. . . . . But you see I am not practical enough. . . . Ah! careless and inconsistent family, who will never understand that a less vigorous, a less energetic, a less exuberant nature, would already have been dead!

Saturday, November 5th.—I am in Paris! What bound-

less delight! I counted the hours while shivering in the train. The grey tones of this fine city are very enjoyable after the exciting air and burning sun of Spain, and I think with satisfaction of the art treasures of the Louvre—I who was bored by the mere thought of them.

Julian thought that I would return much later, and most likely in ill-health, and perhaps never return at all. What a sweet thing is sympathy, but above all things painting.

Sunday, November 6th.—The law-suit is over, and we have gained it. That is to say, the preliminary inquiry shows that there is no ground for a law-suit. It seems too good to be true, considering for how long it has dragged on, but still it is so. We have just had a telegram from mamma. This is a happy day.

Tuesday, November 15th.—I showed the rough draft for a picture to Julian, who approves. But he doesn't inspire me with confidence any longer; he looked confused; however, I may be imagining it.

There is Tony; but I have not seen so much of him; still, we shall see.

Poor Mlle. Colignon died about twenty days ago. We never cared much for each other; but she was so unhappy of late that I sympathised with her misery in spite of my indifference.

Thursday, November 17th.—I could not drag myself along yesterday, as I suffered so much with my chest, my throat, and my back; I coughed, and had a cold; I couldn't swallow anything, and kept turning hot and then cold.

I feel a little better to-day; but all the same! . . . . I, who have had the advice of the highest medical authorities! And for so many years! ever since I first lost my voice I have had every care. Yes, this is the ring of

Polycrates which I throw into the sea, much against the grain. But as this dreadful disease has got hold of me, it ought to be made up to me by success of another kind. No one can say that I have everything, whatever I may attain to. This should reassure me. . . .

Monday, November 21st.—Dr. Potain was sent for on Wednesday, and he has come to-day; in the interval I might have given up the ghost.

I knew quite well that he would again order me south; the mere expectation of it made me gnash my teeth; my voice trembled, and I had some difficulty in keeping back my tears.

To go south is to give in. And considering the persecution of my family, I feel my honour at stake to keep up in spite of everything. To go means letting all the vermin of the studio triumph over me.

"She is very ill; they have taken her to the south."

Tuesday, November 22nd.—It is impossible to express with what despair this exile to the south fills me. It seems as if everything were at an end for me who came back overjoyed at the thought of remaining quietly at work, to work steadily and without interruptions, while keeping in touch with the artistic movement . . . . And now again all has become vague!

And while others will go on progressing in this art-world of Paris, I shall be yonder doing nothing, or running after some picture in the open air, which is a horribly difficult thing to do.

Look at Breslau, it isn't her peasant woman which has been the making of her. . . . In a word, my heart is breaking at the thought of it all.

I have seen Charcot this evening, who says that the disease has not grown worse since last year; I have simply been

suffering from a cold during the last six days, which will soon be well. As regards my going south, he says just the same thing: I must go there, or else shut myself up completely like a prisoner. If not I shall run the risk of catching something serious, as the right lung is affected, and it seems I have been lucky to escape hitherto. The disease being local, and not having increased, in spite of my so-called imprudence, may be cured. I was told the same thing last winter, and wouldn't even listen; now I hesitate, and spend hours in crying, at this idea of leaving Paris, and being interrupted. . . .

It is true that if I should often feel as I have been doing these last days, I shall not gain much by being in Paris. It is this which fills me with despair!

To give in, to avow myself beaten, to say, "Yes, the doctors are right; yes, I am ill!" Oh, unquestionably, everything goes wrong!

Saturday, November 26th.—I was to have gone to Tony, you remember, to work in his presence, show him my sketch, and decide something, but I didn't go out. I feel weak, and can't eat anything, being still feverish, I suppose. It's dreadfully sad to be kept inactive by . . . . by . . . . I know not what; to have no strength, in short! Charcot has come to see me again.

Mamma and Dina arrived yesterday, recalled by my aunt's insane telegrams. Dina has received a letter from her sister this morning asking how I am.

I know I have caught cold, but everybody can catch cold.

But no, everything is over; my ears are in a sad way, what with this cold and fever. What can I hope for? What can I attain? There's nothing to expect now. It's as if some veil had been torn the other day, five or six days ago. It's all over, all over, all over!

Tuesday, November 29th.—This has been going on for a fortnight now, and I may expect it to last as long again.

Mme. Nachet has brought me a bunch of violets to-day, I have seen her as I do everybody, for in spite of continual fever and congestion of the left lung, *alias pleurisy*, and two blisters, I don't give in; I get up and behave like other people. But the quinine makes me deaf; the other night I thought I should have died of fright when I no longer heard my watch. And I must go on taking more of it.

But after all I feel pretty strong, and if it were not that I have not been able to swallow anything for the last fortnight I shouldn't know I was ill.

Ah, but for all that, my work, my picture, my poor picture! It is now the 29th of November, and I shall not be able to begin till the end of December. I shall not have time enough in two months and a half. How unlucky! There's no use in struggling when one is born to be unfortunate. Look at me; painting seemed a refuge, and behold, I am almost deaf at times. This makes me most dreadfully uncomfortable with my models. I endure continual anguish, and find it impossible to do portraits, unless I mentioned my infirmity, and I have not as yet got this courage. In the next place, this illness makes it impossible for me to work, and forces me to remain shut up for a month. Really, it's too sad!

Dina never leaves me—she is so sweet!

Paul and his wife arrived yesterday. The Gavinis came, and Géry, Bojidar, and Alexis. I kept up my spirits, and got the better of my ills by dint of chaffing and courage. . . .

The doctors at present afford me a subject for jokes. Potain, not being able always to come himself, has sent me a doctor who will come every day.

This amuses me, for I act the mad girl, and this gives me an opportunity for saying the most insane things.

Wednesday, November 30th.—Julian came to see me yesterday evening. He thinks me very ill, as I could see by his affectation of gaiety. As for me, I am deeply grieved. I am doing nothing; and as for my picture! And, above all, to be doing nothing! Do you understand my despair? To have to remain here in idleness, while others are working, are making progress, are getting their pictures ready!

I thought God had left me painting, and I had fled to it as to a supreme refuge. And now that too fails me, and all I do is to spoil my eyes with weeping!

Thursday, December 1st—*Friday, December 2nd.*—It's already the 2nd of December. I ought to be at work—to be looking for all sorts of stuffs, and for the big vase in the background. . . . What's the use of these details? It only makes me cry. I feel much stronger—I eat, I sleep, I am nearly as strong as usual.

But still, there is that congestion of the left lung. The right side, where the chronic affection is, seems to be better—but I don't care about that. What bothers me is this acute illness, which is curable, but will keep me indoors *for some weeks still to come.* It's enough to make you drown yourself.

Ah, it is cruel of God! I had annoyances—family troubles—but they did not touch the very inmost part of myself, so to speak. And then I had such vast hopes. . . . Then I lose my voice—this is the first personal blow. At last I get used to it—I become resigned, I give it up, I am consoled!

Well, since you can become reconciled to all this, the means of working shall be taken away from you!

No sketch, no picture—nothing at all—and the loss of a whole winter! I, who had put my whole life into my work! Only those who have been in the same plight will understand me.

Wednesday, December 7th.—How this illness exasperates me! Yesterday that horrible sub-Potain, who comes every day—the great man only being able to take that trouble twice a week—well, this assistant, in a careless sort of way, asked whether I was preparing for my journey?

Their South indeed! Oh, merely the thought of it convulses me with rage! I couldn't eat in consequence, and if Julian hadn't come I should have cried with anger the whole of the evening.

Well, no, I don't care! but I won't go south.

Friday, December 9th.—There is a drawing by Breslau in the *Vie moderne.* If I hadn't wept so much, I might have turned my illness to account by making designs and drawing. But my hands still tremble a little.

The lung is cured, but my temperature is still thirty-eight degrees. What a fine thing, to tell you all these details!

I feel I am done for, and dare not ask any questions for fear of hearing what Breslau is painting.

O God, grant my prayer, and give me strength! Have pity upon me!

Thursday, December 15th.—It is now four weeks and two days since I was taken ill. I made quite a tearful scene for the benefit of Potain's assistant, who didn't know how to quiet me. For, giving up the puns, cock-and-bull stories, and other tit-bits with which I tickle his fancy, I began complaining and shedding real tears, with my hair all down, and sobbing piteously over my childish griefs, after the manner of little girls. And I must own that I did it all in cold blood, not believing a word of it. It was just as when I act a part in a play, and manage to turn pale, and to cry quite in earnest. In short, it seems to me that I should make an astonishing

actress—but I cough, and have not breath enough left at present.

My father has arrived this morning. All goes well—only Paul's poor wife feels herself quite put out of countenance, finding an indifference in him which borders on dislike. I behaved properly, and gave her a very fine emerald mamma had given me, and that I didn't know what to do with.

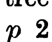
I was rather sorry afterwards; I might have given it to Dina, who adores jewellery. Basta!

I don't mean to say that papa is tiresome; on the contrary, he is a little like me, both mentally and physically (this is praise); but this man will never understand me.

Just fancy his planning to take us all to the country for Easter!

Oh, it's too much, and his indelicacy is too great: to talk of taking me to Russia in February or March in my state of health! You may judge for yourself. But let us overlook it, and leave the rest! No, no! I who won't hear of going to the south! Oh no, don't let's talk of it any more.

Sunday, December 18*th.*—In a *tête-à-tête* with Julian I gave vent to all my complaints, and he tried to console me by advising me to make drawings every day of things that strike me. Of things that strike me! And what should strike me in the surroundings amidst which I live? Breslau is poor, but she moves in an eminently artistic sphere; Marie's best friend is a musician; Schaeppi is original, if vulgar; and then there's Sara Purser, a painter and philosopher, with whom you can have discussions on Kant, on life, on the *Ego*, and on death, which make you reflect for yourself, and imprint on the mind what you have read or heard; all helps her, down to the quarter she lives in—*Les Ternes.* Our part of the town is too clean, too monotonous, you never see a creature in rags, nor a tree that hasn't been trimmed, nor a crooked street.



Then you complain of your wealth? . . . Not so; I merely note that comfort may interfere with artistic development, and that the surroundings in which we live make half our individuality.

Wednesday, December 21st.—To-day I have been out, wrapped up in furs, with the windows up, and a bear-skin over my feet. Potain said this morning that I might go out if there were less wind, and I took proper care. The weather was splendid, ... as for the precautions!

But that isn't the question, it is rather Breslau: "tout entière à sa proie attachée." My picture for the Salon is spoilt. What have I to show for her picture of this summer?

This girl is a power; she is not the only one I admit; but we come out of the same cage, not to say the same nest, and I foresaw and predicted her gifts, and announced them to you during my first days of study, ignorant as I then was, very ignorant. I despise, and have no faith in myself. I don't understand why Julian and Tony say what they do. I am nothing; I have nothing in my vitals (Oh, Zola!). Compared to Breslau, I seem to myself like a thin and brittle card-board box compared to a richly-carved, massive oak chest. I am hopeless about myself, and am convinced that if I were to talk to the masters about it, they would come to the same conclusion.

But I mean to persist for all that, and to go on with closed eyes and arms stretched out, like one about to be engulfed in an abyss.

Thursday, December 29th.—It is eight days now since I have written anything; this will show you that my glorious existence has been taken up with a little work, and some calls. Nothing new; however, when I am well enough I go out; I went to try on some dresses, and then for a drive in the Bois, and to see Julian on Saturday, with mamma and Dina.

And on Sunday I went to church to prevent their saying that I am at my last gasp, as that charming Bertha tells everybody.

On the contrary, I am picking up again; my arms, which were so thin ten days ago, are getting rounded; this means that I am better than before my illness.

If I go on like this for another ten days, I shall have to stop getting fatter, for I shall just be right, as I don't want to get back my rather too pronounced hips of three years ago. Julian, who came yesterday evening, says that I am much more graceful as it is. We laughed about it all the evening. I am painting the portrait of Paul's wife. Yesterday I felt such an accession of strength, that I wanted to do Dina, Nini, and Irma, at the same time. Irma is not an ordinary model; they say she is the type of the now vanished Grisette; she is droll and sentimental, with a strange sort of *naïveté* amidst her vice.

"When you have become a *cocotte*" . . . . I said to her the other day.

"Oh dear," she answered, "I am not lucky enough for that!"

She sits with intelligence; she does for anything with her startling pallor, for she may be taken for an innocent young girl, or an abyss of depravity, like all those young ladies of the street.

She asked for leave to remain, although there was nothing for her to do, and spent the afternoon crocheting in front of the fire.

Friday, December 30th.—There's been nothing but quarrelling going on all day.

At last, in order to recover from it, I go to Tony's, and show him the drawing for the portrait of Paul's wife. He declared it to be very original, very original in its arrangement, and well conceived. The sympathetic Fleury showed himself delighted to see me restored to health, and after talking very

gaily for a while, we touched on the very grave subject of art, and spoke of Breslau, amongst other things. . . . "She has certainly a good deal of talent," said he; "she is highly gifted."

Ah! it's impossible for this paper to interpret my feelings! All the fire and the fever. . . . Oh for the power to work night and day, all the time, all the time, and do something really good! I know well that he says, that whenever I choose I can do as much as she; I know equally well that he credits me with the same gifts; but I am ready to cry, I am ready to die, I am ready to go no matter where, where I could. . . . But could I really? Ah! Tony has faith in me, but I have no faith. . . . I am consumed by the desire to do something good, and I know my incapacity. . . . Here I must stop. As you believe me implicitly, you might really seriously believe. . . . I have said it in the hope of being contradicted. . . .

O Lord! here I am writing all this, and spending my time in trying to find the most appropriate expressions for my troubles, while Breslau, not nearly so foolish, draws and works.

CHAPTER V.

PARIS, NICE, RUSSIA, 1882.

Monday, January 2nd.—My great passion just now is my painting, I cannot venture to say "my art;" to speak of art (and its aspirations or inspirations), one must have made one's name. Without that, you have the air of a conceited amateur, or, rather, there is in doing so . . . . something of indelicacy which wounds the better feelings in my nature; it is like acknowledging some noble action . . . . a false shame, in fact.

Wednesday, January 4th.—Julian spends the evening in teasing us about our partiality for Tony, and on his for us. At midnight we take chocolate; Dina is very gracious . . . . for the rest, I quite understand that people should keep their charms for connoisseurs.

I always dress with special care for the artists, and quite differently—long gowns, without stays, and draperies. In society, my figure would not be thought slim enough, nor my dress sufficiently fashionable; thus all my prettiest fancies, too extravagant for society, will help me with the Ministère des Beaux Arts. . . . I am always dreaming of forming a salon full of eminent people. . . .

Friday, January 6th.—Art, even amongst the humblest, raises the mind, and gives us the feeling of possessing more than those who do not belong to the sublime brotherhood.

Wednesday, January 11th.—We are giving a soirée to-morrow, our New Year's Eve. Preparations for it have been going on for a week; more than two hundred and fifty invitations have been sent out, for they have been very

much in demand among our friends. As no one has yet begun to receive, it is quite an event, and I fully believe that we shall have some very distinguished people. Won't that be charming?

Étincelle puts a paragraph in her notes of the *Figaro*, with a poem in honour of Mlle. Marie, the beauty, the artist, &c. &c. For that matter, Étincelle is charming; had she never written a word, I'd still think her the most charming of the ugly. She is more seductive than fifty lovely women, with a sort of Parisian hall-mark, a stamp of personality. Take note of what I say, for it is an indescribable something. All the celebrities, whether men or women, old or young, have a certain note in the voice, a certain air which is the same for all, and which I will call the family air of notoriety.

We shall have the two Coquelins. The elder Coquelin, Léon's friend, came yesterday to see the drawing-rooms, and settle about the pieces. G—— was there, and he bored me with his connoisseur airs. A little more, and he would have given advice to Coquelin, who is very agreeable—be it said in passing—a good fellow, who does not for one instant make you feel that embarrassment which so many people feel in the presence of a stranger of note.

Friday, January 13th.—The two Coquelins were splendid, and the drawing-room presented a lovely sight, as there were a good many pretty women—first of all the ravishing trio, the Marchioness de Reverseaux, daughter of Janvier de la Motte, Mme. Thouvenel, and Mme. de Joly; the Countess de Kessler, they were nearly all beauties . . . . and, in short, all "suitable guests," as Tony says, who stayed away, as did Julian also. Mme. G—— was enchanted, and ended up by dancing and waltzing with Count Plater, upon my honour.

There was dinner first.

Then, as for artists, there was the brother of Bastien-Lepage, who was still away. His brother, it's always so,

but on Thursday we are going to see the real one. And George Bertrand. . . . Last year he painted an admirable and moving picture entitled *Le Drapeau*; I showed appreciation of him in my chronicle, and he sent a very kind message. I sent him an invitation from "Pauline Orell." Pollack presents him to me. It is amusing; he pays me great compliments, for though I carefully hid my studies, Dina has shown some of them to whomsoever she saw fit. Carrier-Belleuse was languishing beneath my eyes towards the end of the evening, and looked quite tender and sentimental as he insisted on the cruelty of the device: *Gloriæ Cupido.*

That youth is capable of becoming very amorous, and perhaps is so already; but it will pass off; he clearly sees *Gloriæ Cupido*—and nothing more.

We had supper at three o'clock. Gabriel was on my right, and nearly sixty people stayed. Nini was charming, lovely, with splendid shoulders, and an exquisite dress. Dina, mamma, and aunt, were also beautifully dressed. I wore a gown made by Doucet and me jointly, a nearly faithful reproduction of the Cruche Cassée of Greuze. Little loose curls fastened behind to a small chignon, rather high on the nape. A long chain of Bengal roses disappearing and shedding their petals in the folds of my skirt. The short, narrowly-pleated skirt is made of silk muslin; the bodice of satin merveilleux, laced up the front, very wide, and forming folds at the waist, being made without point, and a scarf tied askew. A second petticoat of muslin, lined with satin, open in the front, and looped back, forms paniers, one of which is filled with roses. I was looking charming. Potain's odious assistant was walking about like a shadow, in order to catch me, and keep me from dancing.

Sunday, January 13th. — There is a long article by

Étincelle about our soirée; but, as it was expected, no one is satisfied. It compares me to the Cruche Cassée, and my people are afraid lest it be regarded as an insult at Poltava. It is too silly! The article is really very good; only, as she had said two days ago that I am one of the prettiest women in the Russian Empire, she contents herself this time with describing my dress. Hence comes the disappointment.

I am heart and soul in my art. I think that I caught the sacred fire somewhere in Spain, along with my pleurisy; from a worker I am beginning to turn into an artist; it is a hatching of heavenly things which makes me slightly mad. . . . I compose in the evening and dream of an Ophelia. Potain has promised to take me to Sainte-Anne to see heads of mad women; moreover, an Arab, an old Arab, sitting and singing to a sort of guitar, keeps haunting me, and I am thinking of doing a large canvas for the next Salon, a little carnival scene . . . .; but in order to do that I must go to Nice. Yes, Naples for the carnival, certainly; but, to work out my big undertaking in the open air, I have my villa at Nice. . . . I am saying all this while my wish is to remain here.

Saturday, January 21st.—Mme. C—— is coming to take us to see Bastien-Lepage. We find two or three Americans there, and little Bastien-Lepage, who is small, and very fair, with hair *à la bretonne*, a snub nose, and a youth's beard. All one's notions are quite upset. I adore his painting, and it is impossible to regard him as a master. I feel inclined to treat him as a fellow-comrade, and there hang his pictures to fill me with admiration, awe, and envy. There are four or five of them all life-size, and painted in the open air. They are quite lovely; one of them represents a female cowherd of eight or ten years of age in a field; there is a bare tree with the cow beneath it; the

poetry of it is very impressive, and the eyes of the little girl have an expression of infantine and rustic reverie which I do not know how to describe. He has the air of a good-natured little man, very self-satisfied . . . . this Bastien!

I come in to help mamma to receive a large number of people. That's what it is to give soirées in Paris, you see, says one of our friends.

Sunday, January 22nd. — The carnival fills all my thoughts just now, and I am making sketches in crayon. If I only had talent, what a charming thing it would be to do.

Friday, January 27th.—Gambetta has fallen, that is to say, he is no longer minister; but that matters little in my opinion.

But just notice how present events show the cowardice and bad faith of mankind! Those of the *Intransigeant* who are attacking Gambetta do not for a moment believe in all those idiotic accusations about the Dictatorship. . . .

Ah! I shall always be disgusted by the infamous deeds which are done daily.

Monday, January 30th.—We will certainly go to the villa Géry at Nice. As for Saturday, I had a pleasant day. Bastien, whom I saw last evening at the ball at the Hôtel Continental, where the Queen presided, and which was given for the benefit of the Breton Salvage Corps, came and stayed for more than an hour; I showed him some of my work, and he gave me advice with flattering severity. For the rest, he said that I was *marvellously* gifted. As that had not the air of a compliment, I felt such a strong movement of joy that I was on the point of seizing the good little man by the head and embracing him.

Anyhow, I am very gratified at having heard him. He

gave me the same advice as Tony and Julian, and said the same things. Besides, is he not a pupil of M. Cabanel? Every one has his own characteristics, but as regards the grammar of the art, it must always be sought among what are called the classics. Neither Bastien nor any one else can teach his own peculiar qualities; one can only learn what is to be learnt, the rest depends upon one's self. Mme. de Péronny (Étincelle) has come, and I have spent a full quarter of an hour between this cultured woman and this great artist, before my fireplace and then under the palm-tree, puffing myself out with vanity and pleasure. I shall not trouble myself about the other visitors, whom I have left in the state drawing-room with mamma.

Nice.—We started at eight o'clock in the evening—Paul, Dina, myself, Nini, Rosalie, Basile, and Coco. The villa Géry is just what I wanted. It is in the open country, and only ten minutes' walk from the Promenade des Anglais. We have a terrace, gardens, and a roomy, comfortable house.

We find everything ready, and M. Pécoux, the steward, with bouquets.

I took a tramway ride this evening, which enchanted me; there is the gaiety of France and Italy combined without the Paris mob. As I wrote to Julian, it is as convenient as Paris, and as picturesque as Granada; at five metres distance from the Promenade des Anglais what costumes, rags, and models, are to be found, and such tones! Why go to Spain? O Nice! O South! O Mediterranean! O my beloved country, which has caused me such suffering! O my first joys, and my much greater griefs! O my childhood, my ambitions, my charms!

Do what I will, everything will always commence there, and side by side with the sufferings which have darkened my sixteenth year, there will always be recollections of first youth, which are, as it were, the finest flowers of life.

Tuesday, February 7th.—I am smarting. Wolff dedicates ten lines of extreme flattery to Mlle. Breslau.

However, it is not my fault. One acts according to one's talents. She is entirely devoted to her art; but as for me, I invent gowns for myself, I dream of draperies, of bodices, of retaliations in society in Nice. I do not mean to say that I should have her talent if I did as she does; she follows her bent and I follow mine. But I feel my wings clipped; in fact, I feel my incapacity sufficiently to make me wish to give up for good and all. Julian told me that I could do just as much if I would. If I would? why, in order to have the will there must be the power. Those who succeed with *I will* are, unknown to themselves, upheld by secret forces which I lack. And to say that at times I have not only faith in my coming talent, but that I feel the sacred fire of genius! O misery!

At all events, here nobody is to blame, it is less enraging. Nothing is so horrible as to say to one's self, "Had it not been for that person or for this, I might have gained my object." I think that I do all I can and I attain nothing.

O God, grant that I may be mistaken, and that the consciousness of my mediocrity may be all a mistake!

Friday, February 10th.—The blow was so severe that I have spent the last three days in real misery.

I am no longer going on with my large painting, but am doing simpler and more reasonable things and studies. I have made a solemn resolution not to lose another minute and not to make any more vain attempts. But *to concentrate myself.* Bastien, Julian, and also the fortunate Breslau, all recommend me to do so. Yes, Breslau is truly fortunate, and to be as much so as she is I would give unhesitatingly all that is called my *good fortune* and *wealth.* With an income of ten thousand francs to give independence, and with talent in addition, what more can you want?

Anyhow, she is awfully fortunate, is that girl! Every time that I think of Wolff's article I feel how unfortunate I am! Yet it is not what is called envy. But I have not the heart to analyse my feelings, and to find the most appropriate expressions. . . .

Monday, February 13th.—On Saturday I commenced a picture: for a whole fortnight I have been on the look-out; two or three subjects have attracted my attention, but they have not progressed beyond the second sitting. It is always thus when it is not just right. . . .

You make up your mind to a subject in order not to lose time in researches, and then you feel bound to go on with it; besides, what is sought rarely succeeds; nor does it follow that we always succeed when we think we have hit upon the right thing; but at least there has been the pleasure of being captivated by it. How long will it be before I am convinced that a subject is useless in unskilful hands? However, even for simple studies you must do what pleases you; it is useless to tell me that the subject need not prepossess me. I began a picture which rendered me perfectly wretched for four or five days. I did not venture to give it up, and I had not the heart to work at it; after I did give it up I felt a sense of deliverance. I am making sketches in water-colour for the first time; every minute is occupied, and I have found my picture; for, in addition to minor things, I must take a big study to Julian. My subject is three street boys close to a gateway. It looks to me very realistic and amusing. The blow I received from Wolff's article has done me good; I was crushed and overwhelmed, and the reaction has made me comprehend things concerning art which tormented me, because I did not attain them and even doubted of their existence. This has caused me to make a healthy effort; I also begin to understand what I

have read of the struggles, sufferings, &c. &c., of artists; I used to laugh at them as empty fiction. That famous *will* of Breslau, I have had recourse to it, and I see that in order to obtain those results which I thought fell from heaven, great efforts must be made. That is to say, I have made no real effort hitherto. This extreme facility in work has spoiled me. Breslau obtains fine results, but with much labour; as for me, when it does not come at once and of itself I remain stupid. This must be overcome. I have been trying to compel myself to work up my sketches and crayon *compositions* to the requisite finish, and have succeeded in doing things of which I thought myself incapable, and which I believed others did by trickery and almost witchcraft, so difficult is it to see in others faculties which we do not ourselves possess.

If I could go on working as I have done these few days past, I should be very happy! It is not a mere question of working like a machine, but of being continually occupied and thinking all the time about one's work, that is happiness. No preoccupation stands against it. And I, who complain so often, am thanking God for these three days, at the same time dreading that this state of things may not last.

Everything changes its aspect then; petty miseries almost cease to worry; you are above all that, with a something radiant in your being, a divine indulgence towards the vulgar crowd which does not know the secret, changing, fluctuating, and varied causes of your beatitude, more fragile than the most fragile flower.

Tuesday, February 14th.—Ah! what enjoyment in observation we who have read Balzac and who read Zola possess!

Wednesday, February 15th.—The eyes are opened little by little; formerly, I used to see only the drawing and

the subject of pictures; but now.... ah! now if I could execute as I can see I should have talent. I *see* the landscape, I see and love the landscape, water, air, and colour—colour!

Sunday, February 19*th.*—If you knew my torments! I struggle against idleness and against that terrible *it will be bad,* which prevents me from doing anything. And I suffer keen remorse for every lost hour. . . .

And why do you not do rough sketches, and this, that, and the other? And when I see the drawings in the *Vie moderne,* I turn red and pale, and want to do at the first attempt just as much as these people who have been working at them for ten years past, not perceiving that one must keep on at them, even do bad ones, and still go on, in order to make good ones at last. Ah! what a terrible and dangerous moment it is when one quits the regulated and mechanical work of the studio, and feels the need of becoming pliable and dividing one's self into portions, so to say, in order to do a little of everything; in short to be left to one's own judgment for understanding what is needful, and knowing where the fault lies. *To be conscious of one's condition.*

It is a good sign, but diabolically tormenting. This has continued for several months already, and this constant struggle would be detestable if it were not for the vague hope that it may perhaps lead to several months of continuous work, fruitful, calm, and well-considered, which will open up new horizons, and then . . . .

I recollect that two or three years ago . . . . the fortunate Breslau passed through the same torments as myself; for whole months she could not get anything done, and I have seen her pass some horrible Saturdays for her; she was ready to take up sculpture out of sheer despair.

Monday, February 27*th.*—After a thousand perplexities I

have spoilt my canvas. The boys did not sit, so attributing these failures to my incapacity, I commenced again and again, and at last . . . . it is very fortunate; those dreadful monsters moved, laughed, cried, and fought. . . . I am honestly doing a study, in order to be free from the torture of painting pictures; all that I undertook became at the end of twenty-four hours either stiff, or vulgar, or clumsy, or pretentious, after having pleased me very much. . . . Besides, it is better to do simple studies; I am at such a critical period, and how much lost time—Biarritz, illness, and a month here already!

If I had not wished so madly to paint pictures, or rather if I had not been knocked over by Wolff's lines in favour of Breslau. . . . There is only one thing which can set me up again, it is to produce work which will be acknowledged to be very good; but there. . . .

Paris, Thursday, April 20th.—Well, I don't feel as I did after Spain; I am not enchanted at seeing Paris again, only satisfied. . . . Besides, I cannot account for any feeling, I am so disturbed about my work. I tremble to think what will be said, and I am crushed by the remembrance of Breslau, who is treated by the public as a full-fledged artist. I went to see Julian yesterday (we reached Paris yesterday morning), and he no longer treats me as a serious worker—brilliant, yes, but no depth, no will; he would have desired more—he had hoped better things. All that, in the course of conversation, made me feel very bad. I am waiting for him to see my work from Nice, and no longer hope for anything good.

I have painted Thérèse, a child of six years old, going for provisions, in a country lane, life size; then an old man at his window, beside a pot of rose carnations, life size; then a boy carrying a sack, life size, half length; two small landscapes; three sailors, five or six little studies, and some crayon

drawings; also two unfinished pastels and etchings in my album.

I do not know whether they are good or horrible, and all these fears send fire, as it were, all over me.

Saturday, April 22nd.—No, look you; what I should want in order to live would be the possession of great talent. I shall never be happy like the rest of the world; to be celebrated and to be loved, as Balzac says, that is happiness! . . . And yet to be loved is only an accessory, or rather the natural result, of being celebrated. Breslau is lean, crooked, and worn out; she has an interesting head, but no charm; she is masculine and solitary!

She will never be anything of a woman unless she has genius; but if I had her talent I should be like no one else in Paris. . . . That must come. . . . In the mad desire that it may come I seem to see a sort of hope that it will come.

This absence, this interrupted work . . . . no longer to have advice and encouragement . . . . it is bewildering! . . . You feel as though you had returned from China, you are no longer up to date. Ah! . . . . I think I like nothing as I do painting, which, in my eyes, must give me all other kinds of happiness! False vocation, false disposition, false hope! This morning I went to the Louvre, and behold, I am slandering myself; one ought to be able to reproduce when one sees as I do. Formerly I used to have the confidence of ignorance, but my eyes have been opened for some time past. This morning it was Paul Veronese's turn to appear to me in all his splendour and magnificence—this unheard-of richness of tones! How shall I explain that these splendours have hitherto seemed to me great, dingy, grey and flat canvases? . . . What I did not see, I see now. . . . The celebrated pictures, which I looked at simply out of natural respect, charm and fascinate me;

I feel the delicacies of colouring; in short, I appreciate *colour.*

One of Ruysdael's landscapes has made me return to it twice. Some months ago I saw nothing in it of what I see this morning—of real atmosphere . . . . of space; in, short, it is not painting, it is Nature itself. Well, that I now see all those beauties, which I did not see before, is owing to my trained eye; it may well be that the same phenomenon is produced in the hand.

I do not mean to say that until I went to Spain I was absolutely wooden, but that journey certainly removed a veil from my eyes. . . . Well, then, I must now work at the studio—I have done enough independent things to render my hand supple for the moment; now my technique must become first-rate, and I will paint a picture. . . .

Sunday, April 23rd.—I have just spent some minutes before the studies I made at Nice. Even the thought that perhaps some good quality may be found in them sends a shiver down my back; for Tony, Julian, and Bastien, seem to me so mean, and of so little account compared with the immense effect that their words can produce on me.

There are no true anxieties, or true happinesses, except in things which concern our fame. What a grand expression!

I cannot settle myself. On Monday I will go to the studio to set to work again. It looks as if I had been lazy for months, and as if some misfortune had happened to me.

I have not done as well as I could; I was in a hurry to get back to Paris. . . . I have come a cropper again! These thoughts pass through my head like heavy clouds, and fill me with anguish, making me feel hot and cold every five minutes. . . .

The sky is grey and stormy, it rains, and the wind is scorching; outside, the same state as within . . . . it is a physical effect then!

But I had something else to say—some reflections, which I have forgotten, about love, owing to what I have read this morning.

Love is the constant theme. To be loved by a man sufficiently inferior to yourself to look upon you as a goddess from heaven, would have a certain charm. . . . Some one who acknowledges his inferiority. To know that with a look you pour out treasures of delight! . . . . There is a charitable side to this, which flatters our feelings of generosity.

Tuesday, April 25th.—My own disquietude was enough, and I had no need to see the anxious faces of my relatives looking at me to see if I felt any emotion. In short, this is what Tony said:—Dina's costume in her disguise, "Very good, very good"; the man on the sea-shore, "Very good, too"; then Thérèse's head, "Not at all bad, but the tone of the landscape in respect to the dress is not correct"; the little landscape, "Very good"; the old man's dress, "Very good"; the old man himself, "Well drawn, but not simple enough, and not enough something else; in short, there's good work in them." . . . "Well," you will say, "you ought to be satisfied." Ah! he also added that I needed to make a very carefully worked out study; that he would watch my work closely, and be at my disposal whenever I have recourse to him. Well, they afterwards made him take a cup of broth in the dining-room, expecting a tirade upon my enormous talent. But as he was expected by the commission of the Salon at five o'clock (that's why he chose this day to come here, for we are quite close to the Salon), and being pressed for time, he contented himself with thanks for the glass of Marsala and the broth, and took himself off speedily.

Then my aunt said that he is a fool, and knows nothing; mamma added that it is really astonishing that I should be so cast down. It is true that I looked worried through their meddling anxiety. . . . It seems that all mothers are the

same; but it is none the less irritating on that account. In short, I was reduced to the weeping point, and came to pour out the fulness of my poor heart here.

I ought to be satisfied . . . No, I am almost crushed, and mamma is nearly right. . . . There is not sufficient reason for it. . . . I wished that man to say to me—to prevent my utter collapse, it would have been necessary for him to say—"*Very good! you have hit it this time; it is excellent; you are as powerful as Breslau, and have more good points than she has.*"

Anything less than the above could not satisfy me or even lift me out of the despair I have been in for a year past on account of my painting. True, he did say, when he saw the man on the sea-shore, that it is "*Very good, very good*"; then pointing out the tone of the drapery in relation to the horizon, said that too is "*Very good*"; also the little landscape which he looked at several times: and Dina's pastel and mine, which is partly good; and Thérèse's head, which is "*Not at all bad.*" What do I want more? I don't know. . . . And in the first place he was too hurried; it seems to me that he did not look at them enough. . . . I should have liked him to pay me a long compliment upon my extraordinary gifts.

This *good* so often expressed fails to satisfy me while I have still on my heart the *very good* accorded to Breslau, for a little picture that she painted in Brittany two years ago!

And when he says the same thing to me for my little picture painted at Nice, it does not seem to have the same value. Why? Before I started for Nice, he said to me that Breslau's fisherwoman was *very good.* Now that this same fisherwoman is received under No. 3, he tells me only that it is *not bad.* In short . . . . I am not satisfied. Why? Firstly, because my family based such extraordinary hopes on those few studies that only the absurdest compliments

would have satisfied them; and then there's the effect of the Spring on the nerves. When I get thus over-excited, my arm burns above the elbow—it is rather funny. Wise doctors please explain!

Saturday, April 29th.—I am not an artist; I have drawn without any difficulty just as I do everything, but I cannot . . . Yet when I was a child of three years old I drew profiles in chalk on the whist-tables in the country, and then ever after . . . . you would have sworn that it was my vocation . . . . and see what it comes to! . . . However, I have nothing to say except that these are trying moments to pass through; I collapse. Yet, after all, what has happened? why, nothing . . . . Breslau has been working much longer than I have—almost twice as long . . . . Admitting that I am as gifted as she, everything is quite natural; for I have been painting for three years, and she—well, she has been painting for more than five.

Sunday, April 30th.—I have spent all the morning varnishing with Villevielle, Alice, and Webb. In black, very becoming. I am amused to see that I am not unknown to society in the Paris world. Carolus Duran came to talk to me—very kind—he is a charming man. Breslau's picture is quite skied, and the effect is deplorable. I was so disquieted at the success which she appeared certain to obtain that it is a great consolation; I won't conceal it. Her friends came with tears in their eyes to ask my opinion; I told them that it was not a fine picture, but that they ought to have given her a better place.

The outcome of this brilliant day was my conversation with Julian, in which he reproached me with wasting my talents, with not fulfilling the splendid promises . . . . &c. In short, he thinks I am submerged; so do I, and we are going to try to fish me up again; I told him sincerely

that I am quite aware of this deplorable condition, that it disheartens me and that I think I am done for; he reminded me how powerful I was, and that a sketch of mine, which he possesses, attracts the attention of every one who goes to see him . . . . and so on. Ah! *mon Dieu*, get me out of this, get me out of this! take me; I was going to say that . . . . God was very good to me in not suffering me to be killed outright by Breslau, at all events to-day. I do not know how to express myself so as to avoid the appearance of mean sentiments. If the picture had been as I expected, it would have made an end of me . . . . in the deplorable condition of my work. . . . I have not for one moment wished that it should be bad, that would be ignoble; but I dreaded so much to see a formidable success; I was so nervous when opening the papers that God has perhaps taken compassion upon me. . . .

Tuesday, May 9th.—Tony and Julian dined here to-day. I put on a fantastic dress, and we did not separate until half-past eleven. Julian was very droll after the champagne, and Tony very handsome, very sedate, and very calm, with his fine worn-looking head. You would wish to move that soul, with its air of tender melancholy, all in half light.

I cannot imagine the professor carried away by violent emotions; he is calm and logical, and if it were a question of the heart he would show you their cause and origin with perfect composure, just as if he were explaining the relative merits of a picture. In conclusion, and—as he says—to sum up, he is charming. . . .

The portrait of a young girl, by Sargent, haunts me. It is ravishing! It is an exquisite painting, that one would willingly place in a gallery with works of Van Dyck and Velasquez.

Saturday, May 20th.—Ah, I am disheartened! What

have I been doing since I came to Paris? I am not even eccentric any longer. And what have I done in Italy? On one occasion I allowed myself to be kissed in secret by that stupid A——. Well! and after that? I am disgusted with it! But plenty of young girls have done it, and do it, and no one says horrid things about them. I assure you that when I hear scraps of the things that have been said about us and about me, I feel quite numbed, it is so overwhelming.

The law-suit has been disastrous, but it has come to an end. Then something else springs up. They attack me! . . . . And to think that while I am quiet and alone in my room—surrounded by my books, after working for eight or ten hours, to think what people may say about me—that I am morally dragged from this deep retirement, stripped, remarked upon, distorted: that thoughts and actions are attributed to me! . . . They say I am twenty-five, and confer upon me a mortifying independence which I have never had. Oh dear! it makes my arms fall at my side, and I feel inclined to cry.

Yesterday we went to the Salon with G——, the brother of Bastien, and Beaumetz. Bastien-Lepage is going to paint a picture of a little peasant looking at a rainbow. It will be sublime, I can tell you. What talent, what talent!

Monday, May 22nd.—I fully believe that I shall never love . . . . but one . . . . and he, it is probable, will never love me. Julian is right: to take my revenge I should need a crushing superiority . . . . to make a tremendous match with a leader of society—rich and well known! How splendid it would be! Or else to have such a talent as Bastien-Lepage, which would bring all the eyes of Paris upon me! I am delightful: I speak of it as though it might really happen to me! I have nothing

but misfortunes. O God, let me have my revenge at last! . . . I shall be so considerate for all that suffer. . . .

Thursday, May 25th.—This morning we have been to see Carolus Duran. What an astounding and charming creature! He is rather laughed at for doing something of everything. . . . What does that matter? He shoots very well, rides, dances, plays the piano, the organ, and the guitar, and sings. It is said that he dances badly; but as regards everything else, he does it with wonderful grace. He thinks himself a Spaniard and a Velasquez. He has a very attractive person, engrossing conversation, and there is in his whole manner something so good-natured, so much self-satisfaction, so much ease and pleasure in admiring his own dear self, that no one can object—quite the contrary. And if you smile occasionally, you are not the less conquered, especially if you think of all those whom we swallow who have not a quarter of his ability.

He is in such deadly earnest about himself. But supposing we were in his place, who amongst us would not have his head slightly turned?

This morning his studio was never empty. The light, coming from the roof, gives a sort of old-world look to the very modern studio. The visitors have a formal and admiring air, and Carolus plays the master with a counterfeit air of Faure in *Don Juan* or *Rigoletto*. He goes from group to group, with his moustache curled, his leg stretched out, his beard diabolical, and his hair inspired, and from time to time hurries off to scribble something at his desk, with haggard looks, now and then rubbing his hand on his forehead, as though to keep down his genius. He is exaggerated, that's plain enough; but I am always charmed when any one poses as an interesting personality, which makes you think of romantic days, which have passed away.

This mixture of music, brush, and sword, is very amusing; and if in these days it makes people laugh, so much the worse for those who laugh! Carolus Duran is right—the more so as his talent justifies his attitude and his pretensions.

And then he is charming with all women, they say, and says pleasing trifles.

"What did you see to admire at the Salon the other day?" I asked him.

"You were there; what else was there to look at?" . . .



Or again, when I was lamenting about painting. . . .

"Ah! art is terrible! . . . You would like it to come to your feet, like men prostrated in the dust. Well, no! it resists you, and you adore it."

Attitudiniser, comedian, anything you like! I will not conceal the fact that I detest dull people, and so much the worse for those who only see the comic side of these exceptional natures, which are charming, in spite of their acting and attitudes. You will adduce, on the other hand, persons of great talent, who are modest and retiring; ah! so much the worse for them and for us!

When heaven gratifies you with all its gifts, you are an incomplete creature if you remain in your corner, instead of taking advantage of your true worth to make a little *display*, as vulgar fools term it.

Friday, May 26th.—The rewards bestowed are disgusting; that gained by Zilhardt is one of the best deserved. But there are others, it is sickening, and makes one very sad!

It would seem as though artists ought to be more conscientious and more honourable than other men. Well, it is not so at all, and I am vexed at it.

Sunday, May 28th.—The Duchess de Fitz-James called to say that she would take us this evening to her daughter-

in-law's. There was a ball. Mamma declares that the duchess is the most amiable person in the world. They see one another pretty frequently, but I do not know anything for certain. So we are going to fetch her, and arrive all together.

Everything is most elegant: real society, real young ladies, ravishing and fresh; real toilettes. The old duchess has I don't know how many nephews and grand-children. The names I heard mentioned are those of the best known and most aristocratic people, and the few persons with whom I am acquainted are the most elegant. As to me, enchanted as I was to find myself in this drawing-room, I thought all the time about a pastel which I had done in the morning, and which haunted me as a bad one.

Besides, one cannot escape like that. . . . I should want at least two months of society to captivate me with it. But do you think that that really amuses me? . . . Is it not rather stupid, hollow, and dull? And to think that there are people who live only for it! For my part, I should like it occasionally; just enough to be in the current, for instance, as celebrities do who go into it only for relaxation; but enough, however, not to have the air of a Hottentot, or a dweller in the moon.

Monday, May 29th.—Yesterday we went to the Bois with Adeline, who says that we are fairly launched in the most aristocratic society of Paris, and to-day we are paying visits to the Queen, the two Duchesses de Fitz-James, the Countess de Turenne, Mme. de Briey, and, lastly, to the American.

I saw Julian this morning; he thinks the large pastel of Dina is very good.

But the question is about a large picture for next year; but Julian is not taken with the idea, being too much of a Parisian to enter into this conception. As for me, I am very enthusiastic about it, and do not venture to say so, for only those who have talent may be enthusiastic or excited about a subject. On my part, it would be pretentious and ridiculous.

I had thought of an episode in the carnival, and I give it up. It would only be a display of colour. . . . I feel deeply what I want to do; I go into it heart and soul, and for months already—in fact, nearly two years. . . . I do not know if I shall be strong enough this winter to do it well. . . . Then so much the worse, for I shall produce a mediocre painting, but that will have all the qualities of truth, emotion, and feeling. It is impossible to do a thing badly that fills your whole soul, especially when you draw well. . . . In short it is the scene when Joseph of Arimathea has buried the body of Jesus, and the stone has been rolled before the sepulchre; every one has gone, night falls, and Mary Magdalen and the other Mary remain, alone, seated in front of the sepulchre.

It is one of the finest moments of the sublime drama, and one of the least hackneyed.

There is in it a greatness, a simplicity something appalling, pathetic, and human. An indescribable and fearful calm; the exhaustion of grief in the two poor women. . . . The material side remains to be studied. . . .

Saturday, June 3rd.—The competition is decided; it is quite a joke, there are only two classed, and they are the worst; no medals; I think the professors are laughing at us.

From three to five o'clock we are collecting on the great staircase of the Salon; I look charming in a Louis XV. dress, pale rose colour with moss-coloured velvet. There are plenty of people—Queen Isabel, who is very gracious to me; then some friends, and the sympathetic American, who gives twenty francs. Furthermore, all those who pass give me something. When I am not worried, there is something pleasing about me which is attractive. Three young artists who had passed rather quickly consulted together after looking at me, and then one of them returned to give me forty sous. It was very nice, for the collectors are usually avoided, and one runs as quickly as possible when one is compelled to pass through

their ranks. At five o'clock I was with the duchess; she took us to Viscountess de Janzé, who has an hotel filled with curiosities, and who is one of the queens of Paris, as Balzac said. Afterwards to the Bois with the Duchess de Fitz-James and her grand-daughter Mlle. de Charette.

Thursday, June 8th.—It is more than four o'clock; it is broad daylight. I close the shutters hermetically to make myself artificial darkness, while the blue blouses of the workmen are passing in the street as they are going already to their work. Poor fellows! It rains before five o'clock in the morning! these poor people are working hard while we moan over our miseries in lace from Doucet's! What a vulgar commonplace I have just written. Every one suffers in his own sphere and grumbles, and every one has good reasons for doing so. I, at the present time, complain of nothing, for if I do not possess talent, no one is to blame for it. I never complain except about things that are unjust, unnatural, detestable, as so many things in the past . . . . and in the present still; though, it is true, this isolation may be beneficial in perhaps leading me to develop talent. Fortunate Carolus Duran, who is a celebrity, and who thinks himself the most sublime artist of all times!

I want to go to Brittany, and work there.

Tuesday, June 20th.—Ah, well! nothing new. An interchange of visits and painting . . . . and Spain. Ah! Spain, it is one of Théophile Gautier's books which has caused all that. Is it possible? What! I have been to Toledo, Burgos, Cordova, Seville, and Granada! Granada! What! I have visited these countries whose very names it is an honour to utter; eh, well! it is delirium. To return there! To see those marvels again! To return alone or with some of one's fellow-comrades; have I not suffered enough through going there with my relatives! O poetry! O painting! O Spain!

Ah! how short life is! Ah! how unfortunate one is to live so little! For to live in Paris is only the starting-point of everything. But to go on those sublime travels—travels of connoisseurs, of artists! Six months in Spain, in Italy! Italy, sacred land; divine, incomparable Rome! It makes my head swim.

Ah! how women are to be pitied; men are at least free. Absolute independence in every-day life, liberty to come and go, to go out, to dine at an inn or at home, to walk to the Bois or the café; this liberty is half the battle in acquiring talent, and three parts of every-day happiness.

But you will say, "Why don't you, superior woman as you are, seize this liberty?"

It is impossible, for the woman who emancipates herself thus, if young and pretty, is almost tabooed; she becomes singular, conspicuous, and cranky; she is censured, and is, consequently, less free than when respecting those absurd customs.

So there is nothing to be done but deplore my sex, and come back to dreams of Italy and Spain. Granada! Gigantic vegetation! pure sky, brooks, oleanders, sun, shade, peace, calm, harmony, poetry!

Wednesday, June 21st.—It is all scratched out, and I have even given away the canvas so as not to see it. That is killing. O painting; I do not attain to it. But directly after destroying what one has finished, there is a feeling of comfort, freedom, and readiness to recommence. The studio in which I work is lent to Mlle. Loshooths by an American named Chadwick, who arrived to-day, and we restore her temple to her.

Thursday, June 22nd.—This hôtel has so pleased me that I was quite silly about it, and as apartments were already engaged, I was mad at not being able to rent the hôtel,

30, Rue Ampère, which seemed to promise me complete happiness.

I have a whole floor, with studio and balcony. The ladies on the first floor, below the drawing-rooms. A garden for painting in the open air without going out. In short, it was too lovely—it would never happen. I was ready to pay a premium of five thousand francs to the proprietor of the apartments. And lo! it is done, and without a premium: we can have the hôtel, and now I have quite cooled down. I find it a long way off, the studio not so very large, and dear besides, and so I am vexed—that is to say, vexed at leaving the Champs-Élysées. In short, as regards living there, I had only one dream—the Avenue de Villiers, the hope of artistic surroundings, and of becoming acquainted with artists. Now, this part of my dreams is realised. Well! now I am worried with the idea that if I gain medals I shall be indebted for them to friends. I must also add that I have stamped with rage because I had no one to whom I could show my drawings and paintings; in short, to confess the truth, because my talent was ignored by artists; now I have the artists, but no longer anything for them to see. This evening at five o'clock we went to see Bastien-Lepage's sketches; he is in London, but his brother Emile did the honours of the studio. I had brought Brisbane and L——, so that we spent a charming hour, laughing, talking, making sketches, and everything was so proper and so pleasant. If I had heard all that about Breslau I should have been lamenting my fate and envying her. Now I have what I wanted, does it give me talent?

Friday, June 23rd.—At five o'clock L——, Dina, and I are with Emile Bastien, who sits to us. I paint him on a little panel, No. 3 or 4, I think.

I am painting on the real Bastien's own palette, with his

colours and brush, in his studio, and with his brother as model.

However, it is a dream, and a childish superstition; the little Swede wanted to touch his palette. I have kept some of his old colour, and my hand trembled, and we laughed.

Saturday, June 24th. — It is done. We have got the hôtel. I am heart-broken: to leave the Champs-Élysées, without reckoning habit; this affects me just like a loss. However, it consists of vast basements, with kitchen and billiard-room. The ground floor, raised ten steps, has a vestibule: then, having passed a fine glass door, you enter an ante-chamber, in which is the staircase leading to the other floors; on the right is a room turned into a salon by making a door, and joining this room to a little tiny room, opening into the garden; a dining-room and a garden, with a carriage drive, and with steps leading into it from the drawing-room and dining-room.

On the first floor there are five bed-rooms, with dressing-rooms and a bath-room. The second floor is mine, and consists of an ante-room, two bed-rooms, a library, a studio, and a lumber-room. The studio and the library are connected by an immense aperture, fourteen yards long by eight broad.

The light is magnificent, from three sides and from the top. In short, for a hired hôtel I cannot imagine one that would suit me better. Well, what then? Why, it seems to me a long way off, it is ten minutes' drive from the Madeleine, going by the Boulevard Malesherbes. In fact, it is 30, Rue Ampère, at the corner of the Rue Bremontier, and the house is visible from the Avenue de Villiers.

Well, what would you? There's the moving, which is most depressing; and there is leaving these apartments where I have been so quiet. . . .

Ah! so much the worse! it is done now; yes, signed at the notary's.

Friday, June 30th.—I can't settle down, I wander about . . . . and do nothing! There's the rub! The other day I discussed that point with Julian; he says that one way or another I have done nothing for a year and a half, save a month's work by fits and starts, and then nothing at all!

No continuance, no regularity, no real energy! It is true. I have not stuck to it; I ought to have conquered my work by doing a study every week; whereas, instead of that, I have been looking after fifty different things, and when anything pleases me I am disheartened because I am not able to do it. I have tried to go back to the studio, and I could not do so. Shall I be able to work by myself? I am confused, and no longer know where to go or what to do. I have not the strength to make a simple study; I must always be undertaking too much, and as I cannot get through it I am plunged in despair. And now I am in a state of nervous exhaustion. . . . And, after all, I shall never paint; I have never, never, never been able to do a good piece of painting. For three years I have been painting . . . . I have lost half the time, certainly; but that is all the same. . . . In short, I am out of breath; I must have the courage and will to begin again, it will come back by degrees. I will go back. . . . No, nothing but a big wave can set me afloat again. . . . And I fear that this big wave can be nothing else but a series of patient efforts. . . . But then comes the terrible conviction that I shall not be able to do it, that I shall never paint.

Then go in for modelling?

"You will come back just the same to painting, but still more weakened. . . ."

And then? then it is better to die.

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Wednesday, July 12th.—I am preparing my famous picture, which is going to be very difficult to paint. I shall have to find a landscape of the kind that I imagine . . . . and the tomb excavated in the rock. . . . I should like to be able to do it nearer Paris, at Capri, that is quite the East, and not so far off; any rock will do. But a real tomb will be needed; there must be some at Algeria, and especially at Jerusalem; any Jewish tomb hollowed out in the rock. And the models? Oh! there I should have splendid ones with real costumes. Julian says it is absurd. "It is easy to understand," he says, "that masters, those who know all about it, should go to paint their pictures on the spot, for they go to seek the only thing they lack—local colouring and absolute truth; whereas I lack so much!" Well, but that seems to me exactly what I ought to look for, for I shall obtain no success except by being truthful; why, then, does he want me to forego that local colouring, I who can have nothing or next to nothing besides? What force will this picture have if it is painted at Saint Germains with Jews from Batignolles, and with made-up costumes? . . . Whereas there I shall find genuine, worn old clothes, and natural effects which cannot be made to order. But the time lost in travelling: a fortnight to go, and a fortnight to get settled—a month altogether. I shall start on the 15th of September and arrive on the 22nd: on the 10th of October I shall be able to commence; I give myself three months . . . . a week to settle down and sketch, a week to prepare. On the 24th of October I shall begin to paint, and on the 1st of November the chief head will be done. The body will take me up to the 10th of November; on the 11th I shall commence the other figure, which will take ten days. The 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th of November will be employed in painting the outlines. I give myself ten days more for the background, which brings me to the 10th of December.

Note that I have reckoned for everything nearly double the time which it is likely I shall give to it.

Tuesday, July 25th.—A charming evening, in which everybody is at ease; quiet and amusing conversation, but seemingly melting away in solemn and penetrating music. Only not a word is said to me about art. Fortunately before dinner Julian went up to the studio to have another look at the sketches, and the large panel on which I have sketched the figure in crayon and pastel.

That is called looking for one's painting. Well, doubtless, for this one pleases me, whereas I could not look for last year's, which had no attraction for me.

Oh! if I could do it well! Julian quite enters into my idea; I did not think (and I was very wrong) that he would enter so deeply into the beauty of the scene. Yes, it is true. One ought to make something terrible of it in its calmness and desolation, its profound desolation . . . . It is the end of all things; the woman there is more than an expression of sorrow; she is a mighty drama, complete and terrible. It is the stupefaction of a soul in which there is nothing left. . . . . And taking her antecedents into consideration, there is something so human, so interesting, so majestic, so enthralling, that you feel, as it were, a thrill pass through your hair.

And shall I not do it well? *When it depends upon myself?* It is something which I can create with my hands, and yet my ardent will, tenacious and inflexible, will not suffice. Will the wild, the passionate desire of sharing with others the emotion I feel be insufficient? Come, come, how can I doubt it? Something fills my head, my heart, my soul, my eyes, and shall I not overcome material difficulties? . . . I feel myself capable of everything. It is only that if I am ill . . . I will pray to God every day to save me from that.

Shall my hand be powerless to express what my head *commands?* . . . Surely not!

Ah! God, I fall on my knees and beg Thee not to oppose this happiness. In all humility, prostrated in the dust I beg Thee to . . . . not even to help me, but only, to allow me to work without too many obstacles.

Thursday, July 27th; Friday, 28th; Saturday, 29th.—It seems impossible, however, to paint this picture entirely out of doors. The effect is not of broad daylight, and the evening lasts barely an hour. So I shall not be able to *copy* it, as one does in ordinary paintings, as Bastien-Lepage does, and as all artists do who work in the open air. Ah! I am now touching upon difficulties too great for me to overcome. Well, never mind! I will do it in Algeria as best I can, and then if there is anything to be done over again . . . . or even if it must be recommenced . . . . I shall at all events have brought the first draft back with me.

Sunday, July 30th; Monday, 31st.—Robert Fleury came this evening, and we had a discussion about the picture . . . . and about work in general. I do not work in a satisfactory manner. For two years I have had no continuity of ideas, and so I am never able to pursue a study to the end. That is very true. . . . He says it in order to prove to me that I make as much progress as possible considering the manner in which I work, and that the other young people work longer and better. Nothing is so effectual as perseverance and continuity; whereas a good week now and then, followed by idleness, goes for little, and does not allow of progress. But, it's true, I was ill, travelling, and without a studio. . . . Now I have everything, and if I do not set to work I must be worthless.

The picture is a good one; I will do it well. This week

my painting has been bold, but . . . . to rid me of my despair he would have to say something more exciting; in fact, that I am as powerful as . . . one of the most powerful; that I can do whatever I choose, that . . . And he tells me, when I complain, that it is absurd, and that he has never seen any one do more in so short a time. Four years! then he tells me that the most gifted or the most fortunate do not succeed in less than seven, eight, or even ten years. Oh, it's too bad!

There are moments in which I could dash my brains out. Rhetoric is of no use. I must produce something which will make them leap with astonishment, nothing else will restore my peace. . . .

Monday, August 7th.—The street! Returning from Robert Fleury's we walked through the avenues which surround l'Arc de Triomphe; it was about half-past six—a summer's evening; porters, children, errand-boys, workmen, and women, all at their doors or on the public seats, or chatting in front of the wine-shops.

Ah, what admirable pictures there were—really admirable! Far be it from me to aim chiefly at a parody of truth, that is what vulgar people do; but in this life, in this truth there are admirable things. The greatest masters are great only by truth.

I came in marvelling at the streets; yes, and those who jeer at what they call naturalism do not know what it is, and are fools. It consists in seizing Nature in the act, in *knowing what to choose* and seizing it. The power of selection makes the artist.

My portrait will be indubitably commonplace. I am seated in a large arm-chair in a white muslin dress half-low. The position is bright enough; I seem to be talking, and am full-face. It is very hackneyed.

To return to the street. . . . This mine might be

explored. I should not wish to meddle with the country; Bastien-Lepage reigns supreme there; but for the street there has been hitherto no . . . . Bastien. And in our garden one can paint almost anything.

Tuesday, August 8th.—My head is rather disturbed by Daudet's *Rois en Exil;* I had read it before, but am beginning it again. There are such exquisite pages in it, a fineness of analysis, a clearness of expression which charms me, things which bring tears to my eyes. . .

Mine is not a life; when I am not working everything leaves me; while painting I imagine that I am weaving my good fortune; when I am inactive everything is at a standstill; there is night and silence.

Wednesday, August 9th.—A sitting; then Robert Fleury comes to dinner. I show him a sketch done this morning of a rag-woman whom I stopped as she was passing. Tony R. F. says that it is good. She is before me, and I look at her. Tony says do not do any more to it, though it is scarcely sketched in, but make another very finished picture from it. When by chance I do anything passable I am as joyous as a child.

I am delighted with myself.

Thursday, August 10th.—That poor Tony has rubbed out the left hand at the end of the sitting. Though one may be an Academician, and have received the medal of honour, one is none the less subject . . . . and first of all he wanted to do something very excellent; he told me that he had almost a nightmare and a bad headache because it didn't seem to come right at first.

How I sympathise with these troubles that I know so thoroughly . . . . and of which no one can form an idea who is not *of the fraternity.*

He writes a journal every evening just as I do; what

do you think he can say in it about me? He thinks that Breslau's laurels prevent me from sleeping. . . . But he knows to what a degree I recognise my inferiority. . . . It is true that now I talk of *my picture,* and even that seems to me a presumption! It is only by hearing other nobodies say: "My sketch, my picture," &c., that I have dared . . . . and if it appears ridiculous to me, it is because I should prize so highly the right of saying it openly, and do not want to see it debased or lowered by too familiar and disproportionate usage. You understand me; do you not?

Sunday, August 13*th.*—It is three o'clock in the morning; I cannot sleep. This evening I showed Tony a study of a rag-woman, which he thinks passable, and a new sketch of the picture, which he thinks very good. However, the sketch is not new; it is like the very first which I tore up, and have done over again. I think that things ought to be comprehended at the first glance, especially things which strike you and take possession of you so completely. R. F. is right; this picture is comparatively easy to do, because it is not cut up with details, since the action passes between the lights; the silhouettes are detached in shadow. Everything, be it understood, everything consists in thoroughly seizing the relations of sky, figures, and land. And then, above all, I must give the poetry of the moment, the profound and terrible desolation of the event which has just occurred.

Now he thinks that I have *found* it, that the attitudes are deeply felt, and *poignant;* all depends now in rendering it as I feel it. If you succeed in hitting exactly the tones, the relations of one thing with another, it may be altogether a very fine picture.

Yes, that is all; on one side a kind of fear, and on the other a frenzy.

That depends upon me.

And then I went to bed at midnight, not thinking any more about the day's discussions concerning naturalism, painting, and the street! No longer thinking of anything except this picture, which takes such huge proportions in my brain, now that my imagination is set going. I work at it, it is finished; I bring it back, and it is exhibited. And the crowd in front of it, the emotion which brings a lump to my throat, the fear of some absurdity or other, then excessive joy following this anguish. And when I had suffered all this, with its accompanying shivering and perspiration, I rose at three o'clock; I have been reading, and am now writing with the sketch in front of me. But I am preparing a terrible deception for myself therein! No, as I am not certain of anything, I am going to try. . . . Besides, perhaps the two cups of tea which I took this evening have prevented me from sleeping. Oh no! . . .

Tuesday, August 15th.—May God help me! I wish I had never thought of it, and had not reckoned upon anything; besides, happiness only comes as a surprise, and not when one expects something; but I expect nothing. . . . Only it takes away my sleep. It might be so lovely! I understand it so well!

Thursday, August 17th. — At the last sitting my artist was seeking a subject for a picture, something modern and good . . . . and then he wants to leave a nude figure in his work; "only it is so difficult to find a fine model"; he seems to perceive difficulties so insurmountable. . . . You would think that a beautiful nude woman is not to be found in Europe.

I fully believe that R. F. has a very correct opinion about me; he takes me to be what I should like to appear,

that is to say, perfectly amiable, or, to speak more seriously, a very young girl, a child even, meaning that while talking like a woman, I am at my heart's core, and in my own sight, of angelic purity. I really believe that he respects me in the highest acceptation of the term, and that if he ever said anything broad in my presence I should be absolutely astonished. Anyhow, I always say that I talk about everything . . . . but there is more than one way of doing so; there is something more than conventionality, there is modesty of language; I speak probably just like a woman, but I use . . . . metaphors and sentences so arranged that in saying a thing I seem not to allude to it. It is as though instead of saying, "My painting," I were to say, "The thing that I have done." Never, even with Julian, have I made use of the words: "Lover," "mistress," "liaison;" that is to say, of those exact and customary terms which give you the appearance of speaking of things familiar to you. It is, of course, understood that one knows it all, but one glides over it; if one knew nothing one could not be droll, for there are turns of conversation in which a little malice and raillery on what is called love is unavoidable, however lightly it may be touched upon. With R. F. we speak chiefly about art, but yet . . . . After all, it leads up to music and literature.

Well, now, I quite see that Tony R. F. takes his . . . . acquaintances according to their true nature, that he finds it very natural, and that if I have the frankness not to be silly he has tact enough never to say as much about it as I do. It must be added that you cannot judge me by this journal, in which I am serious and plain. I produce a better effect in conversation; for there are certain ways, certain touches of language, similes, and suggestions at once original, fresh, picturesque, and funny.

I am vain and foolish. . . . I actually believe that this Academician sees me as I see myself, and therefore

appreciates all *my motives*, as one would say of the performance of an actress. That we enhance our own merits is well known; we attribute some to ourselves even when totally devoid of them; well, granted, and then let me tell you that it is very charming to think yourself appreciated. And then with R. F. and Julian I am more open than with others; I feel that I am on safe ground, and confidence gives me a charm that I should not have under other circumstances.

Friday, August 18th.—We did not find Bastien at home; I leave a note for him and catch a glimpse of what he has brought back from London. There is a little errand-boy, a street urchin, leaning on a post in the street; you seem to hear the noise of the vehicles that are passing. And the background is scarcely touched, but the figure! what a devil of a fellow he is!

Ah! what ill-natured fools they are who treat him as a mere craftsman. He is a powerful and original artist, a poet and a philosopher; the others are only manufacturers of something or other when compared with him. . . . It is impossible to look at anything else when his painting is before you, for it is beautiful as Nature and as life. The other day Tony R. F. was obliged to agree with me that you had to be a great artist in order to copy Nature, and that only a great artist can understand and render Nature. The ideal is in the *selection;* as to the *execution*, it must be the summit of what the ignoramuses call naturalism. Paint Enguerrand de Marigny or Agnes Sorel if you like, but let their hands, their hair, and their eyes, be living, natural, and human. The subject is of little importance, and masters have often painted subjects of their own period. Doubtless, from all points of view, the modern is the most interesting, but the true, sole, and good naturalism consists in the execution. Let it be Nature itself, the very life, and let

the eyes speak! It matters little whether it be Mlle. de la Vallière or Sarah Bernhardt! .... Without doubt it is more difficult to create interest .... and yet if Bastien-Lepage painted Mlle. de la Vallière or Marie Stuart—dead, dusty, and hackneyed as they are—they would nevertheless live again. There is also a sketch of the little portrait of Coquelin the elder. . . . I came back from it quite petrified; it is his very grimace, his hands move, he speaks, his eyes blink!

Saturday, August 19th.—I am working in the garden, which gives me quite the scenery of the park Monceau: I am painting a boy of about twelve, with his blouse and apron; he is sitting on a bench and reading an illustrated paper, with an empty basket beside him. . . . This is to be seen here constantly in the park and in the streets.

Monday, August 21st.—I am .... ready to scratch everybody: I am doing nothing! And time goes on; for four days I have not been sitting; I commenced a study out of doors, but it rains, and the wind blows everything down. I do nothing.

I tell you that this void drives me mad! I am told that this torment shows my real worth! Alas, no! It shows that I am intelligent and see clearly. . . .

Besides, I have now been painting for three years.

Tuesday, August 22nd.—I went to the *Marché du Temple* with Rosalie. And my eyes are still wide open with astonishment. It is a marvellous quarter; I bought some old things for my studio, but I did nothing save look at the various types of people. Oh! the street! But that is to say if only one knew how to render what one sees! . . . Alas! I have the faculty of *seeing*, and am still dazzled with what I saw. The attitudes and gestures, life caught in

the act, Nature *true* and *living*. Oh! to catch Nature and to know how to render it!

That is the great problem. Oh! why have I not got that power? . . . That animal, Tony R. F., said truly, "With your aspirations, Mademoiselle, I would do everything in the world to become master of the art."

So I come in and make several sketches of the things I caught sight of: a bench in the street, with several little girls talking and playing together. This assemblage of children's faces is delicious. Then the table of a café, with two men, whose characteristic attitudes are there, graven in my head and sketched on the canvas; the mistress of the café is leaning in the shadow of the door.

And then at the *Temple*, a very fair girl, who laughs as she leans against her stall—a stall of memorial wreaths. This last picture can be done in the studio. . . .

But the two others want the open air. . . . I do not know why I am saying all this. From to-morrow. . . . It is a delirium!

In short, these glimpses that one catches unawares are like windows opening on people's lives: you may imagine and guess the life, character, and daily habits of these people. It is wonderful, of intense and thrilling interest. But! . . .

The imbeciles think that to be *modern* or realistic it is enough to paint the first thing you meet without arranging it. Do not arrange, but *select* and *catch* it; that is everything.

Wednesday, August 23rd.—Instead of working hard at some study or other, I am out walking; yes, Mademoiselle goes for artistic rambles and looks about her! I have been twice to the children's hospital, in the morning and in the afternoon.

The lady-superintendent is already my friend; as for the children, thanks to a largess of bonbons, they surrounded

me at my second visit, pressing round my dress like a flock of charming little animals. All these truthful innocent eyes, still so vague, and all following me with little steps and tottering legs. Then they were made to sit down. And all in play, without any pretensions, the cleverest of them set to work to recite to me, casting a look at me from time to time to see the effect.

As soon as I got back I made a sketch: *Sinite parvulos venire ad me.* Jesus and the children. Ah! if I had but talent!

Monday, August 28th.—There are days in which I really believe myself somebody. Listen, it is impossible that this delirium, these transports, this love for what I am doing, are not destined to end in something great. It is impossible to see and to feel Nature and form as I do, without arriving at . . . .

I have drawn the second figure of the picture; then as Mme. T——, who had arrived while I was working, was reading in a corner, I made a rough sketch of her. Nothing should ever be arranged; no arrangement is equal to the truth; high art consists in seizing the precise moment and painting what one sees. . . .

But let this truth sink well into you: that, in order to *copy* Nature *accurately*, genius is indispensable, and that an ordinary artist will never do more than parody her.

A clever craftsman who copies for the sake of copying does common work, which the vulgar call realistic, and which it is often justified in ridiculing.

It is not a question of taking no matter whom and painting him just as one sees him; the movement that is caught and the position are scarcely retained, and in posing would become stiff: but the mind must be struck, and must retain the *impression* of the instant when you *saw* the thing. That is where you recognise the artist.

I have read one of Ouida's books over again, a woman of mediocre talent; it is called *Ariadne,* and is in English.

It is a book in the highest degree sensational; I have been twenty times on the point of reading it again during the last three or four years, and have always held back, knowing the agitation it caused me, and must still cause me. It treats of art and love, and the scene is laid in Rome: three things united, one of which is enough to excite me, and love is the least of them. The love might be taken away from the book, and fully enough would remain to delight me.

I have an adoration, a veneration, and a passion, for Rome that is beyond everything. For the Rome of artists and of poets, the *true Rome,* has not been injured the least for me by worldly Rome, which has made me suffer. I only remember poetic and artistic Rome, and that makes me fall on my knees.

Sculpture is the art in Ouida's book; I am always on the point of commencing it: last night I could not sleep!

O divine power of art! O heavenly and incomparable feeling, which is worth everything else! O supreme enjoyment, which elevates above the earth! With heavily-laden breast, and eyes wet with tears, I prostrate myself before God to invoke His protection.

It is enough to drive one mad; I want to do ten things at once; I feel, I believe, *believe,* you understand, that I am going to do something important. And my soul flies off to unknown heights.

Provided only that it be not to fall to a lower depth. . . . Those returns are terrible, but one must experience everything in life. . . . Days of depression follow hours of exaltation; I suffer during both. . . . However, I am not affected enough to say that I suffer equally.

To arrange nothing! And the pictures? Mine! Well, it is almost the same thing, a subject arrests you, strikes

you. It is clear that at that very moment you represent the scene to yourself, you see the picture.

If your imagination has been sharply struck, you *see* it almost at the same time that you read of it or think about it.

I am certain that all the really affecting pictures have been conceived in that way.

Beyond that there is only research and correction—studio work. You must only paint what fixes itself upon you, worries you, and takes possession of you.

Dumas is very right. We do not take possession of our subject; it is the subject which takes possession of us. A man who is playing for a hundred sous may experience the same pangs as he who plays for a hundred thousand francs. I can therefore understand it.

No, no! I feel such need of translating my impressions, such violence of artistic emotion; so many confused things are crowding together in my head that they cannot fail to be translated some day. . . .

The formula. Oh, the formula!

Tuesday, August 29th.—This book completely upsets me. Ouida is neither Balzac, nor Sand, nor Dumas, but she has written a book which, for certain reasons . . . . professional ones, throws me into a fever. She has very correct ideas of art; her opinions have been gathered in the studios, in Italy, where she has lived.

There are certain things. . . . For instance, she says that amongst real artists, not amongst handicraftsmen, conception is immeasurably beyond the power of execution. And then the great sculptor Marix (of the novel), who sees the first efforts in modelling of the young heroine, the future woman of genius, says: "Let her come and work, she will be able to do whatever she *pleases*." "Yes," said Tony R. F., looking for a long time at my drawings at the

studio; "work, Mademoiselle, *you will do whatever you please.*"

But doubtless I have not worked in the right direction. Saint-Marceaux said that my drawings are those of a sculptor, and I have always loved form beyond everything.

I also greatly adore colour, but now, after this book . . . . and even before it . . . . painting seems to me very inferior to sculpture. Besides, I ought to hate it, as I hate all imitations and impostures.

Nothing irritates me so much as to see things in relief, imitated in painting on a canvas which is necessarily flat and smooth. What is more odious than pictures of bas-reliefs, from the best things in art down to coloured wall-papers? To me it is like a red rag to a bull. A frame counterfeited in painting on certain ceilings, even at the Louvre. . . . And the wainscots of rooms in furnished apartments which imitate carved wood or lace flounces. It is detestable.

But what is keeping me back? Nothing; I am housed in such a manner that nothing is wanting to my artistic happiness. A whole floor to myself: ante-room, dressing-room, bed-room, library; studio with a splendid light, giving it on any side as required; and a little garden where I can go down and work. I have had a speaking tube put in so that people may not come up to disturb me, and that I may not have to be constantly going down.

What is it I am painting? A little girl who has put her black petticoat over her shoulders, and is carrying her umbrella open. I am working out of doors, and it rains almost every day. And then . . . . of what importance is it? What is it compared to an idea in marble? And what am I doing with my sketch of three years ago, for it dates from October, 1879? This subject was given us at Julian's, and I was taken with it as I was with the holy woman at the sepulchre. Ariadne! Julian and Tony both

thought that its sentiment was good; and I was taken with it as I am with my present picture. For three years I have been on the point of learning sculpture in order to do this subject. . . . I feel quite devoid of strength to face vulgar things. And the terrible "to what purpose?" clips my wings.

Theseus has fled during the night. Ariadne, finding herself alone at daybreak, runs all over the island in every direction, when with the first ray of the sun, as she has reached the point of a rock, she sees the vessel, like a point on the horizon. . . . Then. . . . That is the moment to seize and difficult to describe; she can get no farther, she cannot call; water is all round her, and the vessel is only a point which is scarcely visible; then she falls on the rock with her head on her right arm in a position which should express all the horror of the desertion, of the despair of that woman left there in such a cowardly manner. . . . I do not know how to express it, but there is an impotent rage, an utter dejection to be expressed which take powerful hold of me. You understand, she is there at the extreme point of the rock, exhausted with grief and, in my opinion, with impotent rage; there is an entire abandonment, the end of everything!. . . This precipitous rock, this brutal force . . . . which holds the will captive . . . and the rest!

Yes, exclusive attention to linear perspective is a deception; preoccupation about tones or about colour is a wretched thing, mere journeyman's work, which by degrees absorbs everything and leaves no room for thought.

Thinkers and poets in painting are craftsmen of the eighth order. How could I so misconceive this truth and cling to it with such absurd energy? . . .

Wednesday, August 30th.—I am sketching my Magdalen;

I have a model who is excellent for it ; besides, I saw the head that I want three years ago, and this woman has exactly those features and even that intense, terrible, and despairing expression.

What charms me in painting is the life, the modern feeling, the movements of the things one sees. But how am I to express it? . . . Besides being desperately difficult, almost impossible . . . . it does not move me.

Nothing in painting has touched me like the Jeanne d'Arc of Bastien-Lepage, for there is a something mysterious and extraordinary in it. . . . An emotion understood by the artist, the perfect and intense expression of a great inspiration ; *in short* . . . . he has looked for something grand, human, inspired, and divine, at the same time; *what it really was* and what no one had comprehended before. And has not Jeanne d'Arc been painted? Divine goodness! "My mother's cross!" It is as plentiful as Ophelias and Marguerites. He is preparing to paint an Ophelia ; I am sure it will be divine. As for Marguerites, even I have entertained the idea of painting one . . . . For a certain moment has to be seized, just as in the case of Jeanne d'Arc. . . . It is when the girl—not the Marguerite of opera, in a fine cashmere dress, but the girl of the village or small town, simple—do not laugh—*human*—if you understand you will not laugh—when this girl, *undisturbed* up to that time, returns to her garden after meeting Faust, and pauses, her eyes half cast down, a far-off look, half astonished, half smiling and pensive, feels within herself the awakening of a something new, unknown, charming, and yet sad . . . Her hands scarcely hold the prayer-book which is nearly slipping from them. . . . To do that, I will go to some little town in Germany and paint the picture next summer. . . .

But, good Heavens, what have I done all this summer? Nothing! Besides, perhaps I shall not be able to

execute it just yet, and Marguerite can wait a little longer. But my picture . . . . it is so fine, so sublime to do. Would it not be better to wait a year longer in order to be better able to execute it? . . . Ah! I am silly, I ought to learn grammar, and I am thinking of writing poems. I ought to go to the studio every day up to three o'clock, and then model for three or four hours. That's the truth. And why don't I do it? Why are things so arranged in this world?

It is true that people less advanced than I dare to paint pictures, but they are those who have reached their limit and *can go no further;* I am not advanced, but I can become so, and I have the consolation of being a beginner, for after all I have only been working for five years. And Robert Fleury, senior, devoted four years to drawing before he attempted to paint, and how many there are who spent two years in modelling and several years in drawing? . . . And I draw well and commence to paint fairly: there is life in what I do; it speaks, looks, and lives. . . . What have I to complain of, then? Nothing; I must work! . . . . Only I do not see that my greatness lies in painting . . . . that is to say . . . . I am confused, I can say no more. . . . . I am confused. O fool, the first necessity is to know one's business. The thought, beauty, and philosophy of painting, lie in the execution, and in the exact comprehension of life. . . . To seize life in tones that sing, and all true tones sing. Anything, no matter who or what, if exactly reproduced, is a chef-d'œuvre, for it is life itself.

As regards sculpture, do you imagine then that there is no execution in it? Well, there is hardly any; there is more—there is creation. Yes, the deceptions of lines and colour are wretched subjects for study; there is execution and ability in sculpture, but of a different

kind; there is creation. It is the truth, the real being, complete, *true*, to which, if you are an artist, you first communicate life, and then, if you are roused, and if you have the sacred fire, you give it thought, and a deep meaning, mysterious or grand. There is material work in both; but in sculpture it is simpler, nobler, more . . . . honest, if I may say so. In fact, one can endow it with this spark, this supreme mystery which is in you, which is divine and inexpressible. . .

Friday, September 1st.—I receive a letter from mamma, who writes to tell me that our young neighbours are coming for two months with other friends, and that great hunting parties are to be arranged. She is ready to return, but as I asked her to inform me if . . . . she informs me. There now, that throws me into a sea of incertitudes, doubts, and worry. If I go, it's all up with my picture for exhibition. . . . If, now, I had worked all the summer I should have had for excuse the need of rest; but no. Well, acknowledge that it would be magnificent; ay, but nothing is less likely. . . . To travel by rail for four days and nights and to sacrifice the efforts of a whole year in order to try to please and find a husband amongst people I have never seen. Reason and reflection have no part therein. . . . The moment I begin to discuss this folly I shall perhaps commit it . . . . for I no longer know what I am doing. . . . I will go to a fortune-teller, to Mother Jacob, who foretold me that I should be very ill.

For twenty francs I have just purchased happiness for two days at least. Mother Jacob prophesies the most delightful things for me, only somewhat confused. . . But what persists in recurring is that I am to have an enormous and dazzling success—the newspapers will speak of it; the

great talent that I shall have . . . . and then a great and happy change, a splendid marriage, plenty of money, and much travelling—travels to far countries.

I am going to bed stupefied with joy if you will, but it has only cost me twenty francs. I will not go to Russia, but to Algiers . . . . for if all that is to happen it will take place there just as well as in Russia.

Good night; it has done me good, I shall work well to-morrow.

Tuesday, September 5th.—It rains every day. It is disheartening for me, as I want to work out of doors. I have finished a little girl with an umbrella; it is bad, and the child had an odious head: one of those little street girls of nine years old, as pretty and as antipathetic as can be.

Then I went to the children's hospital, but did not venture to undertake two little boys at once; I should be compelled to finish off badly, for one must reckon eight days for each head. And have I done the men at the café? . . . I don't know; things strike me, and then . . . . Oh, ill-balanced, scatter-brained creature, and with all that . . . . Mad, and consciously so! . . . .

The elder Dumas has said that when we hesitate between two things it is because neither of them is good. . . . And he adds that he never hesitated for more than five minutes in his life. He is very fortunate or a great liar! . . .

Wednesday, September 6th. — I am not an artist; I wanted to become one, and being intelligent I have learnt certain things. . . . Then what explanation can be given to what Robert Fleury said when I began: "You possess everything that cannot be learnt." He was mistaken. . . .

But I do artistic work as I should do anything else

. . . . with intelligence and skill, that is all. Then why did I sketch heads in chalk on the card-tables in the country when I was four years old?

All children draw. But why the constant wish to draw, attempts to copy engravings, while still in Russia; and then at Nice, at eleven years of age? There I was thought to have extraordinary aptitude; this lasted for two years. . . .

While constantly on the look-out for sound instruction I had two or three other masters, each of whom gave me two or three lessons—that is to say, with whom I worked for two or three hours.

In fact. . . . On considering the matter well, I find that I have always been desirous of learning, that I made starts and attempts without any one to direct me; then came my journey in Italy, Rome. . . . We are told in novels of eyes that appreciate lovely things at first sight, but I confess that my eyes open by slow degrees to the beauties—that is to say, the *qualities*—of pictures. . . . In short . . . . I have lost confidence, I have lost courage, I lack something . . . . I see the beauty of colour, but . . . . I cannot even say exactly that I do not attain to it, for there are one or two things which are lovely in colour and good painting. If I have done any I can certainly do more. . . . That is what gives me encouragement. . . . And I came to say farewell to my hopes of becoming an artist and a painter . . . . especially a painter. At all events, I can paint pretty well, but I think that I should succeed better with sculpture. . . . I feel things which cannot be expressed in colour . . . . forms, movements, and expressions. . . .

Thursday, September 14th.—I took my canvases to Julian, and he is very satisfied. I must really finish the fisher, which may be rather a success. . . . Yes, finish; always the same advice. . . . He is not at all exacting, isn't father Julian. . . . Then he went on to say that Bastien's

Père Jacques was admirably painted, but had not very much meaning, whereas the fisher is true to life. . . . It is a type; one sees many such; it is the quiet man who waits for hours without catching anything; his head stands out in relief against the water. If it had been well painted! . . . But there are already good qualities, it is only a question of . . . . And then the little girl with the umbrella; and I proceeded to make a display of all those ideas on art, of which there are specimens in my journal; he says that they have changed me, that I am literary and "artistic," and that, after all, you require something more than thinking. . . . But that is not the point—or, rather, it is, for that would induce me to make progress. . . . The idea of my picture makes me quite mad.

Monday, September 18th.—My poor model being ill, I came home about five o'clock and found R. F., who was looking for a background. We have talked again of open-air painting. . . . If you knew what constant suffering these efforts to hear cause me! I avoid everything I used to seek, I am afraid of finding myself with people. . . . It is fearful. But after all I believe that the painter who has the honour of directing my artistic conscience will be converted by me, and will paint a picture in the open air. Besides, he says that he has no objection to the open air, and that in the main we are agreed. That may be true.

I have just been reading Balzac! And in this respect I agree with his de Marsay, when speaking of this second *self*, which remains a constant and impassive spectator of the first. And to say that he is dead, Balzac! . . . . One cannot know the happiness of loving except by loving a man of universal genius. . . . In Balzac one finds everything . . . . I am quite proud of having several times thought as he did.



Friday, September 22nd.—Yesterday I took the fisher

to R. F. It is not bad, but that was all; he thinks that it is very well arranged, that the expression of the head is very good, and that it is well placed on the canvas. But the painting is thin, the edges hard, and the man is not *bathed in air;* these remarks are R. F.'s and my own; I knew it. Then I spoke of my progress, of my work, and I commit the involuntary fault of confessing my discouragement, and the little confidence I feel in myself. . . . . I sat to day, and R. F. told me that he had spoken about me with Julian, and of my attempts and ambitions. In fact, he pitied me yesterday, and they have agreed, he and Julian, that it would be good for me to do some simple studies at the studio; that the difficulties of the open air are beyond my present powers, and that I am discouraged by it. He said it with so much consideration for my feelings that I could scarcely help crying. I believe he thinks that I am desperate because I have not succeeded with the old fisher, on the success of which Julian had permitted me to reckon, and he wishes to save me from what he thinks disheartens me. He has always told me that no one makes more rapid progress, that I am getting on very well, and laughed heartily at my anxiety to go faster than Nature would allow. Yesterday, too, he said that I am admirably gifted, that I have only to go on, and now I have spoiled everything by my silly complaints yesterday and by my dismayed attitude to-day: I shall never again believe in encouragements; I showed myself too wretched not to believe that it was pity.

As regards my picture . . . . I have not even ventured to speak of it; it is as though the air became lead and drew the skin of my face to the earth and fire to my arms. . . .

Since I have complained and have been foolish enough to expose the greatness of my ambition, these two men can give me nothing but reasonable advice, seeing that it

is neither a sport nor a pastime for me, and that I am reduced to despair. Then like two honest doctors they order me powerful remedies. From all this it seems that I am not able to paint a face . . . . a picture, for a studio exercise is always good enough, whereas . . . . I ought not to have shown myself distressed as though I had founded foolish hopes on the old fisher. . . . I shall no longer have the truth, and then . . . . Breslau? Breslau is two years and a half ahead of me. What does that prove? Nothing. For two years ago she was more advanced than I am now. She has been painting for six years and a half, and I have been only just four years at it. I am not counting drawing in either case. Therefore, if in 1884 I should not do what she does, I am inferior to her.

I have no need to hear that in order to know it. For a whole year I have been undergoing martyrdom. Cruel sufferings, I assure you; loss of my good opinion of myself, loss of confidence, courage, and hope. I am only working with the horrible conviction that it leads to nothing. That is what paralyses me! And nothing can raise me again except a good picture . . . and that is impossible in this moral disaster.

In fact, there is only one thing to be considered; it is that I have not been able to make a good painting of my old fisher, that I have had the good fortune to put my hand on an original, interesting, and artistic subject, and that I have been able to make nothing of it. That is the odious part of it.

I am exhausted, all is at an end, my whole being is annihilated . . . and I have not even language to express this consternation which deprives me of the power of holding my pen. . . Now for excuses; it rained, and I have always been interrupted just as I was executing a picture; that is true. . . I ought not to have brought

forward that picture which I did not yet consider presentable; but I wanted advice as I could not continue working.

Then seeing this powerlessness, Tony said that the open air is too difficult for me. . . To-morrow I return to the Grande-Jatte, and will commence again with the energy and rage of despair.

Sunday, September 24th.—Days pass by and are all alike; from eight o'clock till five painting; a full hour for my bath before dinner, then dinner in silence; I read the papers. Occasionally I exchange a word with my aunt. She must get very tired of it, poor thing! for I am certainly not amiable; she has never had any advantages, for she was always sacrificed to mamma, who was beautiful; and now she lives only for us, for me, and I cannot be gay and amiable during the few minutes that we are together; and I am happy in the silence when I do not think of my infirmities. . . .

In Russia, Saturday, October 14th.—My aunt left me at the frontier and I am travelling with Paul. I make sketches at the stations, and read *Tra los Montes* on the journey; in this way I see Spain again, for Gautier's journey is like a coloured photograph. What is it that prevents my liking Th. Gautier entirely? What is there in this journey which checks you? When he relates some droll episode, it doesn't make you laugh, and he says: *It was the funniest thing in the world,* or *the most comic in the world,* or *it was absurd, &c. &c.* This has the same effect as a man who before telling a story says that he laughed at it like a madman. . . But there is something more. It is not perhaps sincere as literature, or rather it does not flow naturally. . . But it is especially when he speaks of art that he is to be admired, they say; he does not speak

very much of it in this journey, and actually omits Velasquez. I do not understand that in a man who loved painting so much.

He speaks of Goya. Goya was doubtless a great artist, though I only know a few of his paintings; it appears that his drawings and etchings are admirable; so he speaks about Goya, but . . . Velasquez? He speaks of Murillo, and of the magic of his painting. But Velasquez painted most admirably of all; no one has been truer to life; it is real flesh; and, from the point of view of *painting*, it is the summit of art.

We have five hours to wait for the train here . . . The place is called Znamenka, and here I am talking about Gautier, Velasquez, &c. It is cold and grey . . . If it were not so cold, what lovely weather for the open air! I looked at the peasants with their clothes discoloured by exposure to the air, as in all countries, and that too without sunshine; well, I assure you that Bastien's pictures are wonderfully correct. This is grey, that has a flat look, that has no consistence, say those who have not looked at nature out of doors, and those who are accustomed to the violent contrasts of the studio; but it is just so; it is perfectly correct; it is admirably true. He is a fortunate man—that Bastien! As for myself I left with a feeling of disappointment at the ill success of my fisher.

But I will endeavour to do it over again in March for the Salon.

Robert Fleury has made me do it over again. I was to leave the background and the dresses, and work only at the head.

Gavronzi, Sunday, October 15th.—We went to bed at seven o'clock in the morning, for we went straight to Gavronzi from Poltava. Mamma, papa, Dina, and Kapitan, were at the station. Paul's wife has a son of fifteen days old; the little

girl is a year old, and is charming with her long black eyelashes. The young P——'s are to come to-morrow. Michka has gone to their house instead of coming with the others to meet me.

Thursday, October 19th.—They have come at last to have luncheon with Michka. The eldest, Victor, is slim and dark, with a large aquiline nose, somewhat broad and rather thick lips; he looks distinguished and genial. The second son, Basile, is as tall, and much bigger, very fair, with a ruddy colour and cunning eyes; he has a bullying, noisy, brutal, and . . . by my faith, a vulgar air.

I have kept on yesterday's dress, it was of white wool, short, and extremely simple; children's shoes of old red kid; my hair twisted and fastened rather low on the nape. This is not one of my brilliant days, but I do not show too much to my disadvantage either. As it is very fine, there is to be a walking party on the mountain, from which there is a magnificent view; it is like the country round Toledo. These young men talk like men of the world and Russian officers. They are quite young; the eldest is not twenty-three, I think. I am very tired of having had to smile and talk all day long, for papa has insisted upon keeping them to dinner, though they declared that they had an important appointment with their steward, who is making them go the round of their estates, &c. &c. This country custom of pressing people to stay is very silly; it has rather annoyed me.

An incident. Their coachman was drunk, and this, it appears, happens every time here; thereupon, as though it were the most natural thing in the world, Prince Basile has gone out and beaten the poor man with his fists, and kicked him with his spurs on. Does that not give one a cold shiver down the back? This youth is horrible, and his brother seems sympathetic in comparison.

I do not believe that I shall make a conquest of either the one or the other. I have nothing which can please them; I am of middle height, of harmonious form, and rather fair; I have grey eyes, not a large bust, and not a waspish waist . . . and on the moral side, I believe that, without too much pride, I am sufficiently their superior for them not to appreciate me.

And as a woman of the world, I am not more charming than many others in the circle in which they move.

Sarah Bernhardt has been hissed on her arrival at the St. Petersburg station because the people expected to find her tall and dark, with enormous black eyes, and a mass of dishevelled black hair. Apart from this piece of stupidity, the opinion formed of her talent, and of the woman herself, has been very sound; and I am quite of the opinion of the Russian papers, who put Mlle. Delaporte above Sarah. How about Desclée, then? To me, Sarah is not of much account, except the adorable music of her voice when she is declaiming verse. But why have I been talking to you about Sarah?

Friday, October 20th—Monday, October 23rd.—General consternation on Saturday morning. The princes excuse themselves! They will not come to the hunt, being summoned by a telegram to an adjoining property. And I who had so much difficulty in dressing myself! for I must tell you that having drunk bad milk I was feeling so ill, that it is only by a great effort that I have succeeded in putting on this black velvet dress, in which it is impossible to look plain; papa was green, in consequence, and mamma red.

But I laughed, and heartily. At length we have started, out of spite, furious, and swearing to go no further than to Michel's, where the horses were to have a breathing time, and who awaited us with a magnificent breakfast.

Then, with spirits rather calmed, we continued our road,

—quarrelling with one another every five minutes about returning. We halted in the open country. Papa, Paul, and Michka, got down, and discussions went on at the coach door. Mamma's ill-health was given to Michka as a pretext.

At last—papa having told our coachman not to listen to us any longer—we started again, half smiling and half disconsolate. It is clear that no one can suspect our foolish projects. It might well be supposed that we should be delighted had it happened, but no one can imagine that I came as I did; only, we who know the rights of it are afraid, like thieves, that it may be written on our faces. Alexander expected us with the princes. He would not venture to say that he would not have restricted the expenditure if he had foreseen that there would only be ourselves and Michka, who himself must have also felt a slight disappointment. You cannot imagine what these two brutes represent to people's imaginations here. Alexander went to fetch three cooks from Kharkoff—the famous Prosper from the club even . . . .

However, the hunt has been magnificent—fifteen wolves and a fox have been killed. The weather has been fine, and we have lunched in the open wood, with more than four hundred peasants, who had driven the animals towards our guns, looking on at us. . . . Our guns! this is a slight brag, for I have shot nothing, having seen nothing. The wolves went to the left, and I was on the right, as also were papa, Michka, and Garnitsky. I saw a fox, but not within gun-shot. Then drink was distributed to the peasants. Ah! I am forgetting my triumphant shot. . . .

A peasant climbed to the top of a tree. We threw him a bottle of brandy, which he fastened to the topmost branch—of course, after emptying it—and we amused ourselves with shooting at it. Every one has broken a morsel of it—even myself. Alexander did his utmost to be agreeable, with a thousand flatteries about me—Nadine also.

Their son, Étienne, is a charming boy of fourteen, and is the head pupil in the military gymnasium.

As for the menu and the wines, one could not require anything better. And then this country is charming. The house is admirably arranged, and it is only now that I am in a position to understand to what a degree grandpapa (Babanine) was artistic, intelligent, and superior, although buried in his village. The garden and the park, the ponds and the avenues—I would not change anything in them. What an eulogy! Autumn, and the deserted condition in which they now are, after ten years, lends them a great charm. Gavronzi is horrible beside Tcherniakowka.

The rooms here are so well arranged—so *homely*—one feels so comfortable! The peasant women are beautiful, the people so picturesque. You remember, last year, what difficulty I had in finding anything to do at Gavronzi. It is, perhaps, because I was here as a little girl. . . . No, it is because it is adorable, simply. As regards the recollections, they are something quite apart.

And the billiard table—a little billiard table which has been there since. . . . Mamma remembers it in her childhood, and I recollect when I did not reach up to it. I have played on the piano in the great, white, empty drawing-room, and thought of grandmamma who listened formerly from the depth of her room at the end of the long, long corridor. If she had lived, she would not be more than sixty-five years old now.

We dined in the middle of that room where her body lay in state for three days. I do not know whether the others thought of it, but it affected me. . . . But one forgets everything. If she had lived, she would be so proud of me—so happy!

Ah! if one could make the old people alive again, with what attentions one would surround them! Grandmamma had nothing but sufferings.

This evening there is one of those good soirées, such as there were under mamma's reign. All the candles lighted, all the doors open, seven very large salons, which seemed quite filled, though there are not more than sixteen of us.

Étienne has played on the piano pretty well, then a waltz, and Michka putting a Starovoi on his shoulders has waltzed three times round the room.

The policemen who had looked after the hunt had been invited to dinner.

Fireworks are let off, and so that the fête may be complete a rocket sets fire to a very low hen-house covered with thatch. This procures a semblance of emotion for everybody at a very cheap rate. The men and women servants run like hares, the pails of water cross one another, and there is much shouting; for hosts and guests it is a hunt in the night; with that flame and the trees it was charming! We hurried to the scene of the accident in white dresses and satin slippers; otherwise, I should have been in the fire like Michka, papa, Paul, and the policemen.

Papa has been quite in the flames; he has saved all the fowls and has perhaps even run some risk. It is so amusing . . . there was nothing to fear. As for the wretched Jew, author of the fireworks and of the disaster, he ran away with all his might and has spent the night with Paul, whose cottage lies about half-an-hour distant. Papa has given him three roubles for his journey to-morrow, but he has preferred to make the passage hanging behind the landau, and that for forty versts, scarcely straddling on just a morsel of wood. We did not become aware of this traveller until we were half-way.

Friday, October 27th.—It is grey after the lovely sunshine of yesterday, and, depressed through not working, I propose that mamma, Paul, and I should go to Poltava. On the way we met the Princess and Dina, who were coming back, and

Dina returns thither with us. . . . At the hotel we find Michka and Lihopay, and we go to the theatre. A piece which confirms still more my ideas about the Russian theatre . . . plays and novels are always more or less a reflection of real life; but all the same, I am not paying compliments to my country. Its grossness is at once naïve and depraved. . . .

They kiss on the lips, as if it was quite usual, and that occurs between lovers or husband and wife . . . then they kiss on the neck, on the cheeks, &c., and the public says nothing, it seems quite a matter of course to them; and situations that one would have hissed . . . Young ladies of society, the nice girls of the piece, give boxes on the ears to young men who make declarations to them and whom they suspect of loving only their dowry.

In short . . . if all this took place in the demi-monde, or in the realms of fancy or antiquity of Offenbach, and with the accompaniment of all the usual gaieties and follies . . . well and good; but they represent *bourgeois*, owners of property, people like ourselves, and it is quite serious. . . .

One does not know what to make of it.

This evening we see a little wild girl, an *ingénue* who adores a very mature sort of married man, corrupt and witty (in the piece); every time they find themselves alone, and that happens every instant, they kiss on the mouth!—the *ingénue*, without any after-thought, and he for the pleasure of the thing. Then in the evening there occurs an instant in which the man recedes, and the *ingénue* says to him, "Why do you fly from me? what are you thinking of? at all events I am a living being, my blood boils, &c. &c." In short . . . she goes to spend a night with a young man who loves her, and returns to tell the old man and his wife (for he has a young and pretty wife) that it is he, the old seducer, who is the cause of it all; for he has agitated her senses to such a degree that she has been obliged to

. . . console herself with some one else. The young man marries her and, calling her "my affianced bride," he gives her such a furious kiss on the mouth that she will have a blue mark all round it to-morrow without doubt. It is gross, but not immoral; it disgusts you with love, and arouses absolutely nothing.

Monday, November 6th.—In fact, no doubt those people cannot comprehend . . . Paris, elegance, celebrity! why, what is the good? Actors are celebrated, painters are only known by name, and as regards names the only one cited and known is Raphael; and then there are the oleographs of Russian daubers, whose talent is as false, pretentious, and empty as their character. As to elegance, they only believe in that of the dressmakers of Kharkoff "who have the Paris fashions;" and as for our dresses, they are "excessive," "exaggerated," and truly, though coming from Paris, we are not well dressed.

How, then, can I make any one understand what I suffer in remaining here with my arms folded.

Tuesday, November 7th.—Here they go to the ball, get drunk with companions, play at cards, and take supper with ballet-dancers. And if they talk with ladies, it is only when they are in love with them.

But to talk with people generally, as in France, and about all sorts of things, is unknown in these parts. No news penetrates here; there is no conversation except the vulgarest and dullest gossip. And the great distraction is the hotel; owners of property (noblemen), from the neighbourhood sometimes come to spend weeks there, and they visit each other from room to room, drink and play at cards. The theatre is deserted, and everything which might have the shadow of resemblance to an intelligent amusement is regarded with horror.

They crawl in the dust before the aristocracy in this noble country. . . . . Ah! I'd see myself somewhere if I was going to become like that! . . . . However, to return to our princes, whom, to the great astonishment of the Poltavians, I persist in treating, as I treat all the rest of the world, as my equals . . . . and as is usual in the civilised world; our princes do not please me over well. However, the little one—he who beat the coachman—is lively, amiable, and not silly; I do not say that because he played at being humorous by thrusting himself under a table loaded with fruit and champagne, to upset them. . . . . It is true that he beat the coachman . . . . that is comprehensible up to a certain point in this country, and at that age. Do you think they are astonished or shocked here? No, not a bit of it; for another person it's simple enough, for Prince R—— it is delightful. I want to go away!

Paris, Wednesday, November 15*th.*—I am at Paris! We started on Thursday evening. Uncle Nicolas and Michka accompanied us to the first station, and Paul and his wife to Kharkoff. We stayed for twenty-four hours at Kieff, where Julia (uncle Alexander's daughter) is at the institute. She is fourteen years old, and is charming.

Thursday, November 16*th.*—I have been to a great doctor—a hospital surgeon—*incognito* and quietly dressed, so that he might not deceive me.

Oh! he is not an amiable man. He has told me very simply *I shall never be cured.* But my condition may improve in a satisfactory manner, so that it will be a bearable deafness; it is so already; it will be more so according to all appearances. But if I do not rigorously follow the treatment he prescribes it will increase. He also directs me to a little doctor who will watch over me for two months, for he has not the time himself to see me twice a week as is necessary.

I have had for the first time the courage to say, "Monsieur,

I am growing deaf." Hitherto I have made use of, "I do not hear well, my ears are stopped, &c." This time I dared to say that dreadful thing, and the doctor answered me with the brutality of a surgeon.

I hope that the misfortunes announced by my dreams may be *that.* But let us not busy ourselves in advance with the troubles which God holds in reserve for his humble servant. Just at present I am only half deaf.

However, he says that it will certainly get better. As long as I have my family to watch round me and to come to my assistance with the readiness of affection all goes well, yet . . . . but alone, in the midst of strangers!

And supposing I have a wicked or indelicate husband! . . . If again it had been compensated by some great happiness with which I should have been crowned without deserving it! But . . . why, then, is it said that God is good, that God is just?

Why does God cause suffering? If it is. He who has created the world, why has He created evil, suffering, and wickedness?

So then I shall never be cured. It will be bearable; but there will be a veil betwixt me and the rest of the world. The wind in the branches, the murmur of the water, the rain which falls on the windows . . . words uttered in a low tone . . . I shall hear nothing of all that! With the K——s I did not find myself at fault once; nor at dinner either; directly the conversation is just a little animated I have no reason to complain. But at the theatre I do not hear the actors completely; and with models, in the deep silence, one does not speak loud . . . However . . . without doubt, it had been to a certain degree foreseen. I ought to have become accustomed to it during the last year . . . I am accustomed to it, but it is terrible all the same.

I am struck in what was the most necessary to me and the most precious.

Provided that it stops there!

Friday, November 17th.—So henceforth I am going to be less than no matter who, incomplete, infirm . . .

I shall need condescension and help from my own people, and delicacy from strangers. Independence, liberty, all that is at an end.

I, so proud, will have to blush and distrust myself at every instant.

I write this to impress it on myself, but I do not yet believe in it—it is so horrible; for I do not understand it yet—it is so cruel, so incredible.

The sight of my fresh and rosy face in a glass fills me with pity . . .

Yes, all the world knows it, or soon will know it, all those who were already so happy to disparage me . . . She is deaf. But, good God, why suddenly this terrible, frightful, atrocious thing?

Tuesday, November 21st.—Since yesterday I have been working at the studio, having come back to the most simple work of all, concerning myself neither about the choice of the model, nor its beauty, nor any pretension. "Six months of this course," says Julian, "and you will do whatever you please." He is convinced that for three years I have been doing nothing, and I shall end by believing it. In reality, since I began painting I have made no advance; is that as much as to say that I do less? No; I have taken immense pains, and for two years I have been undertaking things perhaps too difficult, but I have been working.

But Julian maintains that *it is* because I do not work that I waste my abilities . .

They all bore me; I bore myself! . . . I shall never be cured. Do you not feel how horrible, unjust, and maddening that is?

I bear the thought with calmness; I have been prepared for it; but yet that is not the reason, it is because I cannot believe that it is for ever.

Do you realise it, for life until death? . . .

Evidently it is influencing my character and my mind, without reckoning that it has already brought me some grey hairs.

I say again, I do not yet believe it. It is impossible that there is nothing, nothing to be done; that it is for eternity, and that I shall die with this veil between the universe and me, and that never, never, never! . . .

Is it not so, one cannot believe in a sentence so final, so irrevocable? And not the shadow of hope, not the shadow, not the shadow!

This makes me so nervous in working, I am always afraid that the model is speaking without my hearing, or some one at the studio, or that they are laughing . . . or even that, for my sake, they are speaking too loud.

And with the model at home . . . But, confound it, they tell her plainly that . . . that what? That I do not hear very well! Try it then. A like avowal of infirmity! And an infirmity so humiliating, so foolish, so sad;—*an infirmity!*

I have not this courage, and I always indulge the hope that it will not be noticed.

I try to set it forth here, you know, but I do not believe it. . . . It seems to me that I am speaking of somebody else. . . . And how realise this horrible nightmare—this fearful, cruel, atrocious thing? . . . . in the flush of youth—the prime of life? How believe that it is possible, that it is not a bad dream—that it is everlasting?

Thursday, November 23rd.—What I am doing this week is so bad that I cannot understand it myself. Julian has called me to him, and has spoken such useless, such

cruel words to me . . . . so . . . . I do not understand it! Last year he said almost the same thing to me. Now, on looking at last year's studies, he says: "You would not do as much at present—it was good work." According to him, for three years I have not been doing anything—that is to say, he commenced his reproaches, lamentations, and little sarcasms from the time I began painting—three years ago.

Perhaps he thinks that he will drive me to work—just the opposite. It has crushed me; I have remained stupefied for three hours, my hands uncertain, and my arms burning.

Last summer I painted Irma laughing, and everybody thought it good. This summer—after Spain and my illness—I have done a pastel that everybody has pronounced exceedingly good, and a painting that is considered fair. What has happened since? I have failed in my fisherman. Yes; and then I have been in Russia—six weeks' holiday—I enter again, I come in for a filthy model, a bad place. I force myself to work, though against the grain; I make a fright, which I scrape and daub over; I try to paint an arm in this muddle. Julian arrives, just as I had sketched it in, and very badly; and then he makes those remarks to me—in his own room, too, in private. I am not Breslau, I know; I need to study, I know; but from that to coming and telling me that all is lost, that I no longer know anything, that there has happened, I know not what . . . . In short, you would say that I know nothing at all, upon my word of honour!

I am not doing it purposely. Then what? After my illness at Nice, all the attempts that I have made have been treated by him as frights. But if it is his opinion, it is also mine, only he need not come and say that it is because I waste my energies that I do nothing, that I am sure of myself, that I will not, that I think I have

attained success. He does not believe it — it is an absurdity. But it is very foolish, for it annihilates me.

If I do not make as rapid progress in painting as in drawing, that is not a reason for saying all these infamous things to me.

Monday, November 27th.—A pupil is sitting to me, and willingly, for I will give her the study. Overwhelmed by Julian, I did not dare to ask it from any one, thinking that it would be ridiculous on the part of any one who is a failure, who no longer does anything, who, &c., &c.

Now that he can no longer say that I do nothing—because I am working in his studio — he says that I am making a semblance of it. That becomes annoying. The day before yesterday he said that it is only for two years that I have been doing nothing. Of these two years I have been ill five months, and convalescent or feverish for six. In the remainder of the time I have done the picture for the Salon — a woman, life-size, in the open air, in Russia; the old man of Nice, Thérèse, Irma, Dina. So much for large paintings. I am not counting a considerable number of studies. That this may be bad, I admit willingly, but after all it is not my cobbler's work.

In short, he thinks that it must stimulate me, and that it may pass for wit. That's exasperating. No doubt, I am not favoured like Breslau, who lives in a small artistic circle, and where every word and every step aid study in some degree. But I swear to you that I do what I can under the conditions in which I am placed.

I am compelled to lose time, no doubt—the evening, for instance, which Breslau spends in drawing or composing, while, as for me, I am distracted and worried by the visitors.

The surroundings are half the battle while you are a student. All this puts me in a cold rage, or one which seems

unnatural, owing to this fixed idea. If I did not fear bringing other horrors upon myself, I should say that God is unjust. Yet, indeed, no! I am horrified at myself, I have grown stouter, my shoulders were already broad enough without that, my arms are stout, and my chest grows fuller.

Sunday, December 3rd.—Ah! my God, give me strength to do nothing but studies, since the advice of them all is that I must render myself mistress of the art; one does what one likes afterwards. I reason so well and I have not the strength. . . . . When one knows one's business well, all that one does is good, or nearly so, whereas in my hands now . . . . What is six months' time? Shall I not wait patiently for six months? To forget all that would amuse me to paint, and to do only studies, and not to lose time.

Continuity of efforts, and then afterwards? . . . .

Tuesday, December 5th.—I have just finished reading *Honorine* at a stretch, and I should like to possess that sublime eloquence of the pen, in order that in reading me one might interest one's self in my dull existence.

It would be curious if the recital of my want of success and of my obscurity were going to give me what I am seeking and shall still seek. But I shall not know it . . . . and, besides, for any one to read me and find his way in these thousands of pages, must I not become somebody? . . .

Uncertainty and discouragement make me remain idle—that is to say, reading all the evening; and then I feel a stinging remorse. But I am either quite alone or else with my family, which is stupefying.

As I write I stop at every word, for I do not find expressions to depict the frightful trouble, prostration, and terror that I experience in not sticking to anything.

What has happened? . Nothing.

What, then? I would consent with joy to live only ten years, to have talent at once and realise my dreams. . . .

Two or three days ago we went to the Hôtel Drouot; there was an exhibition of jewellery. Mamma, my aunt, and Dina, admired several *parures*; but I pooh-poohed it all, except a row of wonderful diamonds enormous in size, which I much coveted for an instant; to have two of them would be very nice, but such a miracle was not to be thought of, so I have contented myself with thinking that perhaps, some day, by marrying a millionaire, I might have earrings of that size or a brooch, for stones of that weight can hardly be hung in the ears. That was really the first time that I understood jewels. Eh, well! yesterday evening they were brought to me, those two diamonds; my mother and my aunt have bought them for me, and I had only said, without the least hope of getting them, "These are the only stones one would covet." They are worth twenty-five thousand francs; the stones are yellow, otherwise they would cost three times as much.

I have amused myself with them all the evening, keeping them in my pocket while I was modelling, and Dusantoy was playing the piano, and Bojidar and the others were talking. These two stones have passed the night close to my bed, and I have not been separated from them during the sitting.

Ah! if other things which seem as impossible could also come to pass! . . . . Even though they might be yellow, and might cost only four thousand instead of twenty-five thousand!

But, however, this great grief is absurd; I cannot complain of it to anybody!

Thursday, December 7th.—We have spoken for an instant with Julian; but no more of those long talks! There is nothing more to talk about, all has been said; we wait for me to work and produce. However, I reproach him with his

injustice, or rather with the manner in which he proceeds to make me move forward.

My pastel will be shown in a club and then go to the Salon. It is a first-rate thing, says father Julian, and I should like to hug him.

Well, you must paint a picture which will strike artists.

And I shall not be able to do it now. Ah! Lord, if I could believe that by working I shall succeed in it! That would give me courage. But it seems to me at present that I shall never be able.

I work badly, I admit; since I did Irma, I have splashed in the rain with father Charles, and then I have been in Russia; total, three months of stupidity. And three months represent twelve studies, twelve torsos life-size or twelve compositions half life-size. I have never in my life made four of them in succession. Julian is right too; I felt I could kiss him!

But I have been ill for a year!

Thursday, December 14th.—This morning we go to see the canvases that the real Bastien has just brought back from the country. He is there, busy re-arranging the borders of the paintings and certain things in the background. We meet like friends; he is so kind, such a good fellow!

Perhaps he is not all that? But he has so much talent! Yes indeed, he is charming.

And the poor architect is completely eclipsed by his brother's radiancy. Jules has brought back several studies: *An Evening in the Village*, the moon is already seen and windows are lighted up; a man returning from the fields, turns round to speak to a woman who is going towards the house with the illumined window; the twilight is marvellously rendered, the calm which pervades everything, the people returning home; everything is silent, one only hears

dogs barking. Oh, what colour, what poetic feeling, what charm! . . . .

In the style of Jules Breton—who is called a poet, as big as your fist—but better.

There is also a forge at which an old fellow is working. It is quite small and is not less beautiful than those marvellous little dark canvases that one sees at the Louvre. Besides this, there are landscapes, water, Venice and London; and two great canvases, an English flower-girl and a peasant girl in a field. It is life-size, and it has filled me with stupefaction; it seems to me so inferior to himself.

At first one is dazzled by the variety and all-powerfulness of this talent which disdains specialism and does everything in a superior manner.

His English boy is far above those two girls; as to the street boy of last year entitled *Pas-mèche*, it was simply a *chef d'œuvre.*

Sunday, December 17th.—The true, the only, the unique, the great Bastien-Lepage came to-day.

I receive him wildly, awkwardly, and confusedly, sad and ashamed at having nothing to show him.

He stayed for more than two hours, after having looked at all the pictures in every corner; only I prevented him from seeing, for I was nervous and laughing at random. This great artist is very good; he tries to calm me, and we speak of Julian, who caused this immense discouragement. Bastien does not treat me as a fashionable young lady; he says just what Tony Robert Fleury and Julian say, only without the horrid pleasantries of Julian, who declares that it is all over with me, that I shall do nothing now, that I am done for. That is what maddens me.

Bastien is adorable—that is to say, I adore his gifts. And I think I have, thanks to my confusion, discovered a delicate and unexpected way of flattery: the manner in

which I received him was already a very great flattery. He makes a sketch in Miss Richards' album, which she had entrusted to me to draw something in; and as the paint penetrated the leaf and soiled the following one, he wished to put a piece of paper between.

"Let it alone, let it alone, it will make two for her." I do not know why I am making Richards' happiness; sometimes it amuses me to prepare a great pleasure for some one who is not expecting it, and who is only a passing acquaintance.

When I was painting at the *Grande Jatte* one day, a whole family, the father and four or five children in rags, with a wretched bundle of clothes, came to the edge of the water; it looked like a household removal of wretchedness. I gave them two francs. It was a sight to see the joy, the surprise of these poor creatures! I hid myself behind the trees. Heaven has never treated me so well, heaven has never had any of those beneficent fancies.

Wednesday, December 20th.—I have, as yet, nothing in hand for the Salon, and nothing presents itself. Ah, what agony! . . . .

Saturday, December 23rd. — This evening we have to dinner the great, the true, the only, the incomparable Bastien-Lepage and his brother!

No one else had been invited, which was rather embarrassing. They were dining for the first time, and that, perhaps, seemed a little too intimate. And then the fear that it may become tiresome—you understand?

As regards the brother, he is received here almost as familiarly as Bojidar; but the great, the only, the true, &c. Well, the little man who, if he were of gold, would not be worth his gifts; the little man seems charmed and flattered. I think, at being made so much of. No one has yet

given him credit for "genius." Nor do I say it to him either, only I treat him as such, and by artificial childishnesses I make him swallow an enormous quantity of flattery. Bojidar comes for a minute in the evening. He is in an amiable mood—overflowing in my sense of the word—quite at home, and delighted at meeting the Bastiens and other celebrities.

But, in order that Bastien may not imagine that I push my admiration to excess, I couple with him St. Marceaux, of whom I speak as "You two!" So he stayed until midnight. I have painted a bottle, which he has approved of, adding that "it is thus that you must work—have patience, concentrate yourself, put into it all that you can, try to render nature scrupulously."

Tuesday, December 26th.—Ah, well, it seems that I am ill. The doctor who is attending me does not know me—has no interest in deceiving me. My right side is injured—the lung is damaged—that is, never completely cured. Only if I take care of myself, it will not get worse, and I shall live as long as another. Yes; but it is necessary to stop it by violent means, such as cauterisation or a blister—all the pleasures, in short! a blister, that means a yellow stain for a year. I shall have to wear a bunch of flowers, which I will place so as to conceal it for the soirées, on the right collar-bone.

I shall wait for eight days longer. If the complication which has arisen persists, I shall, perhaps, make up my mind to undergo this infamy.

God is wicked.

Thursday, December 28th.—That really is the case! I am consumptive. He has told me so to-day—take care of yourself, we must try to cure you; you will regret it.

My doctor is a young man, of very intelligent appearance.

To my objections against blisters and other infamies, he replies that I shall regret it, and that he has never in his life seen so extraordinary an invalid; and also that from my looks one would never, never think me ill. I have a flourishing appearance, in fact, and both lungs are affected the left, however, much less.

The first time that I had a pain on my left side was when I came out of the holy catacombs of Kieff, where we had all been to ask God and the relics of the saints to cure me, by a great supply of masses and roubles. A week ago there was as yet hardly anything audible in the left lung. He asked me if I have any consumptive relatives.

"Yes; my grandpapa's father and his two sisters—the Countess de Toulouse-Lautrec and Baroness Stralborne—a great-grandfather and two great-aunts."

"Well, however that may be, you are consumptive."

My legs were a little tremulous as I came down the staircase of this good man, who takes an interest in so original an invalid. However, it may be stopped if I do what is necessary. That is to say, blisters and the south. To disfigure my shoulders for a year, and go into exile. What is a year compared with a lifetime? It is lovely, too, is my life!

I am very calm, but slightly astonished at being alone in the secret of my misfortunes. And the fortune-tellers who predict so much good fortune for me . . . However, Mother Jacob foretold a malady. Here it is. "In order that her prediction may be completely realised, there is wanting—the grand success, the money, the marriage, and then the love of a married man."—At present I have a pain in my left side, which is the sounder one. Potain would never say that my lungs were affected; he employs the formulæ usual in such a case, the bronchial tubes, bronchitis, &c. . . . It is better to know exactly; that decides me to do everything, except go away this year.

Next winter, I shall have my picture of the two Maries to explain this journey. If I went this winter, it would be to have the vexations of last year over again. Everything except the south; and I commend myself to the grace of God.

In fact, what has caused this doctor to say so much to me is, that I am worse since my last visit. He is really treating me for my ears; and, half laughing, I casually alluded to my chest; then he sounded me, prescribing globules (a month ago) and filthy things to put on my skin, to which I have not been able to bring myself, hoping that the disease would not advance so rapidly.

So I am consumptive. And only since two or three years. In short, it is not sufficiently advanced to kill me, only it is very tiresome.

Oh yes! But how explain my healthy appearance, and my inability to get into my bodices, which were made before I was ill, and at a moment when there was no idea of anything? I suppose I shall get thin suddenly; it is perhaps because I am young, and my shoulders are so broad, my chest so convex, my hips so Spanish. I cannot recover from all these catastrophes.

However, if ten years are still left to me, and if during these ten years I get love and fame I will die content at thirty. If there were any one to make a bargain with, I should be willing to die after thirty, having lived first.

But I should like to be cured . . . . that is to say . . . . to have the disease checked; it is never cured; but one lives with it, and for a long time, as long as any concierge. Consumptive, not only nominally, but really. I will put on as many blisters as they like, for I want to paint.

I shall be able to hide the mark by bodices trimmed with flowers and lace and tulle, and a thousand other delightful things that are worn without being required; it may even look pretty. Ah! I am comforted. One doesn't always put on

blisters. After a year, or at all events two years, of care, I shall be like anybody else—I shall be young . . . . I . . . .

Ah! did I not say that I was going to die? God, not being able to give me what would render life possible to me, gets out of it by killing me. After having overwhelmed me with misery, He kills me to finish up with. I have well said that I must die, that it could not last. I told you so a long time ago, years ago, at Nice, when I already caught a vague glimpse of all that I needed in order to live. But others have more, and do not die! See now! . . .

I shall not tell any one except Julian, who has dined here; and this evening, when we were alone for an instant, I made him a significant sign with my head, at the same time indicating, with my hand, my throat and chest. He will not believe it; I seem so strong. He reassures me, mentioning some friends about whom the doctors had been mistaken.

Thereupon he asks me what I think of heaven? I had said that I had been ill-treated by that same heaven. What I think of it? Not much good. He thinks I believe there is something in it all the same. Yes, it is possible. I read to him Musset's *Espoir en Dieu*, and he replied by the invocation or the imprecations of Franck . . . . "I want to live!"

So do I; well it almost amuses me, this position of a condemned person. It is a pose, an emotion; I contain a mystery, death has touched me with his finger; there is a certain charm in it; it is new, at all events.

And then to be able *in real earnest* to talk of my death, is really interesting—I repeat, it amuses me. It is a pity that I cannot without inconvenience have any other audience than my confessor, Julian.

Saturday, December 30th.—It is getting worse! There, I

am beginning to exaggerate; but really it is getting worse, and it is impossible for me to recover, and God, who is neither just nor good, will probably punish me yet more because I dare to say it! He terrifies me so much that I am going to submit, a submission that will not be placed to my credit because it is through fear.

Provided that . . . .; I cough a great deal and hear sounds in my chest . . . . In short, let us put off everything to the fourteenth. Provided that I last comfortably up to that date. No fever, no drawn face . . . . That is what is so difficult . . . . Afterwards, it will perhaps be too late; it makes such rapid progress; both lungs, think of it! Oh! misery!

Sunday, December 31*st.*—It is too dark to paint; we go to church; and then we go to have another look at the exhibition in the Rue de Sèze, Bastien, Saint Marceaux, and Cazin. It is the first time that I see Cazin's pictures, and I am vanquished. It is poetry; but Bastien's *Soir au Village* yields in no way to this professional poet called Cazin; and note that Bastien has been often injured by the title of first-class craftsman.

I spend a precious hour there; what an enjoyment! There has never been any sculpture like Saint Marceaux's. The words so often used as to be trite: "It lives!" are absolutely true in his case. And in addition to this master-quality, which suffices to render an artist successful, there is a depth of thought, an intensity of feeling, a something mysterious which does not constitute Saint Marceaux a man of immense talent, but almost makes him an artist of genius.

Only he is still young and is living; that is why I seem to be exaggerating.

Sometimes, I could place him above Bastien.

It is my one idea just now; I must have a painting by the one and a statue by the other.

CHAPTER VI.

PARIS, 1883. HER FATHER'S DEATH.

Monday, January 1st.—Gambetta, who has been sick or wounded since several days, has just died.

I can't describe the strange effect produced by his death. It is impossible to believe in it. This man was so much a part of the entire life of the country that it's impossible to think of anything without him. Triumphs, defeats, caricatures, accusations, praise, humbug—nothing held together without him. The papers speak of his fall, but he never fell! His cabinet! Is it possible to judge a cabinet of six weeks? What humbug! and what treachery! You ask of a man to turn into a Sully in forty days, constantly threatening him with his loss of office, for a question of any gross absurdity.

He died attended by seven doctors; and what interests at stake, what an anxiety to save him! What is the good of taking care of oneself, of being worried, and of suffering? Death terrifies me at present as if I could see him.

Yes, I fancy that it is coming—soon. Ah! How small one feels! And what's the use! Why? There must be something beyond; this passing life does not suffice, is not in proportion to our thoughts and aspirations. There is the hereafter, without which this life has no solution, and God seems absurd.

A future life . . . . There are moments when, without quite understanding, we seem to catch a glimpse of it, and are terrified.

Wednesday, January 3rd.—In reading the papers full of Gambetta, I have a sensation as if my head had been compressed in an iron band; those patriotic tirades, those sonorous

words—patriot, great citizen, national mourning! I can't work, I have tried; I wanted to force myself to it, and it is this assumed coldness of the first hour which has made me commit the irreparable stupidity, not to be retrieved now, of remaining in Paris instead of rushing off to the Ville d'Avray as soon as we heard the news, in order to see the room, and even make a sketch. I shall never be an opportunist.

Thursday, January 4th.—The coffin has been brought to the Palace; the President of the Chamber received it. "Thank you for having it here," he said to Spuller, bursting into tears. . . . And I wept too. The austere, the brave, the simple Brisson weeping! He was not his friend. "Thank you for having brought him here!" This has a ring of genuine emotion which no acting can ever impart.

We could not get in after having stood waiting with the crowd for two hours. The crowd was very respectful, if you take the character of the French into account—the pushing, the conversation, the constant temptation of being witty about everything, the inevitable jokes in such a crush.

And when somebody laughed aloud there were people who insisted on silence being kept; they were crying, "It's indecent; be respectful to him!" but they were everywhere selling his photographs, his medals, and illustrated papers—"The Life and Death of Gambetta."

The heart contracts at this brutal confirmation of the event, this publicity which is yet so natural, and appears to me like an indelicacy.

Saturday, January 5th.—We shall see the funeral passing from the windows of Marinovitch, the ambassador of Servia and brother-in-law of the Princess Karageorgevitch, 240, Rue de Rivoli. It would be difficult to be better placed.

At three o'clock the cannon announce that the coffin is in motion; we are at the window.

The car—preceded in splendid style by mounted trumpeters, military bands playing a funeral march, and three huge carts loaded with wreaths—gave me a sense of surprise, akin to disappointment—a severe but just criticism of the two Bastiens, whose work it is. Through the tears, which this magnificent sight brought to my eyes, I distinguished the two brothers walking quite close to their work. The architect, to whom his brother had generously yielded the first place, not himself in need of this celebrity, was *almost* holding the cord of the pall. The car is low, as if crushed with pain—a piece of black velvet being thrown across it, and some wreaths, as if flung there by chance, and a crape veil. The coffin was wrapped in flags. I should have liked to have seen more majesty, perhaps because I am used to ecclesiastical pomp. In short, they wanted, very properly, to avoid the every-day hearse, and to imitate a sort of antique car, recalling the body of Hector brought back to Troy. You would have thought that after three trucks of flowers and several enormous wreaths carried by hand had passed, that it was plenty; but the three trucks were quite lost sight of in what followed—for never, as everybody said, had been seen such a procession of flowers, of flags in mourning, and of wreaths.

For my part, I acknowledge without shame that I was completely overwhelmed by this magnificence. One is moved, excited, over-wrought! no words are left to express the same thing over and over again. What, more! Yes, more, and still more; hand-barrows full of wreaths, of all sizes, of all colours, huge, fabulous, such as were never seen before; banners and ribands with patriotic inscriptions, gold fringes which glitter through the crape. Avalanches of flowers, beads and fringes, beds of roses swinging in the sunlight, mountains of violets and of immortelles. and then a

choral society—the funeral march, too quickly played, dying away in sad notes in the distance; then the sound of steps on the gravel of the road, which I should like to compare to the sound of a shower of tears . . . . and delegations carrying wreaths pass and pass. Committees, associations, Paris, France, Europe, trades, arts, schools, the flower of civilisation and intelligence.

And then come drums muffled with crape, and the grand blare of the trumpet after impressive periods of silence.

The salvage corps are cheered, and so are the students, who salute as if to say, "There is, perhaps, *such another* among us!" Then, again a funeral march, and yet more wreaths. The most beautiful are greeted with murmurs of admiration. There is a cheer for Algiers. As Belleville passed I felt, with that faculty of assimilation and emotion which I possess in so high a degree, a movement of compassionate pride, which clouded my eyes. But when the monumental wreaths of the towns of Alsace-Lorraine appear, and the tricolour flags draped in mourning, there is an agitation in the crowd which brings tears to one's eyes. And the procession still goes on, and wreaths follow upon wreaths, and the ribands and flowers glitter in the sun through veils of crape.

It is not a burial—it is a triumphal march. Why not say an apotheosis? A whole nation follows this coffin, and all the flowers in France are cut to honour this genius, outrageously killed at forty-four years of age, who represented all the generous aspirations of this generation, who had ended by appropriating to himself, and by uniting in his personality, the entire life of the youth of the country—who was the poetry, the art, the hope, and the head of the new men.

Dead at forty-four! having only had time to prepare the ground for his work of requital and of greatness.

This incredible and unique procession lasts for more

than two hours and a half; and at last the crowd closes up again—the indifferent and noisy crowd — no longer thinking of anything, but laughing at the frightened horses of the last cuirassiers. There has never been anything like it—the bands, the flowers, the corporations, and the children who, in the light mist and sunshine, looked like the images of an apotheosis. This gilded vapour and the flowers would make one think of the impossible funeral procession of some young god. . . .

Even putting politics aside, I see that all the world has been driven to show tender regret for him. He was the friend and intellectual companion of this entire generation—he was the Republic, Paris, France, youth, and the arts. I seem to see a piece of stuff from which the chief ornament has been torn away, leaving only a mark and some cut threads.

Ah! flowers, wreaths, funeral marches, flags, delegations, and honours — shower them upon him, impatient, ungrateful, and unjust nation! All is over for the present. Wrap up in tricolour stuff the coffin which contains the frightful remains of that bright intelligence. You are, in sooth, worthy to honour this mutilated corpse—you who poisoned the last year of the life of that spirit who animated it. All is over. There is nothing left but dwarfs, stupefied before the yawning grave of him whose superiority was so irksome to them.

How many are there who said to themselves that Gambetta prevented them from becoming prominent by his absorbing genius! Now you have room—show yourselves! Ye jealous and impotent mediocrities, his death will not change you.

We depart about three o'clock. Everybody turns to the left. The Champs-Elysées is grey and deserted. It is such a short time ago since this man was driving there—so gay, so young, so full of life — in that very

simple carriage, about which he was so much reproached What bad faith everywhere! for intelligent, honest, well-informed men—Frenchmen and patriots—*could not in their hearts and consciences* believe in the infamies with which Gambetta was charged.

It is said that his seat as Deputy is already appropriated by an insect of the Chamber. There is nobody there, then, to oppose this gross injury to the memory of him who has given celebrity to the Tribune of this Chamber, to the steps strewn with wreaths, adorned with lamp-holders, and veiled, like a widow, in long black crape, which falls from the front like a scarf, and envelopes it with transparent folds.

This veil is an inspiration of genius, and a more dramatic decoration could not be invented. The effect is striking; it gives one a shock, and leaves an impression of chill and terror, like the black flag of a country in danger.

Monday, January 8th.—Truly this man filled France and well-nigh Europe. Everyone must feel that somebody is missing; it seems as if there is nothing left to read in the newspapers, and nothing to be done in the Chamber.

No doubt there are more useful men, obscure workers, inventors, and patient administrators. They will never attain this prestige, this enchantment, this power. To excite enthusiasm and devotion; to collect together and unite parties; to be the heroic mouthpiece of his country; is not this useful, skilful, admirable? To animate his country; to be the flag towards which all eyes turn in the time of danger . . . is not this *more* than all those political qualities, those virtues, and that sagacious dexterity of mature politicians? Good heavens! Victor Hugo might die this evening, and it would not affect any one; his work is there, whatever may happen, and it matters little whether he died

to-day or ten years ago, for his career is ended. But Gambetta was life, he was the light of day springing up afresh every morning. He was the soul of the Republic; he was the glory or fall, the triumph or ridicule of the whole country. Events all centred in him, he was the mouthpiece; he was an epic in action and speech, of which we shall *never again* seize either a gesture or an intonation of voice. Marvellous incarnation of a party which is almost the whole of France, and in every way the dispenser of all that made hearts vibrate with sympathy, fear, envy, admiration or hatred; and all is over for ever!

Tuesday, January 9th.—If I could explain myself, I should say that the death of Gambetta fills me with despair.

I wept for the young Napoleon as one weeps at a melodrama; it was tragic, it was, above all, pathetic—this child killed abroad, so far away! . . . but what I weep for now I could not very well say unless I had the honour of being French, and the good fortune to be a man.

Tuesday, January 16th.—Emile Bastien took us to Ville d'Avray, to Gambetta's house, where his brother is at work. Until one has seen it with one's own eyes, one does not believe in such a wretched interior—for modest would very inadequately express it. The kitchen is the only comfortable room in this kind of gardener's house.

The dining-room is so small and so low that one wonders how the coffin found room enough, and how his many distinguished friends were able to surround it.

The drawing-room is a little larger, but poor, and devoid of all comfort. A mean staircase leads to his bedroom, which filled me with astonishment and indignation. What! It is in this wretched cage, of which *I literally touch the ceiling with my hand,* that they left for six weeks a sick man of Gambetta's constitution, and in winter, with the windows

closed. A stout asthmatic man, and wounded into the bargain.

It was then this bedroom *also* that killed him. Vile, cheap paper, a dirty bed, two secrétaires, patched mirrors between the windows, and curtains of old shabby red wool. A poor student's lodging wouldn't be worse.

This man, who has been so much lamented, has never been loved! Surrounded by Jews, stock-jobbers, speculators, company-promoters, he had no one who loved him for himself or even for his glory.

But he need not have been left a single hour in this wretched unhealthy box.

What! Can the dangers of an hour's journey be compared to the dangers of remaining without air in this horrible little room? Why, he might have been carried on a mattress by men without the slightest jar!

Ville d'Avray, or rather *les Jardies*, which were depicted to us in the journals like a little house *à la* Barras. This man was said to be so much taken up with his ease and luxury! Why, it is infamous!

Bastien-Lepage is working at the foot of the bed. Nothing has been touched; the sheets crumpled over the eider-down quilt, which represents the body, the flowers on the sheets. In the engravings one cannot appreciate the proportions of the room, in which the bed occupies an enormous space. The distance between the bed and the window does not allow one to move back at all: and the bed too is cut down in the picture, its legs are not shown. The picture is truth itself. The head thrown back, three-quarter face, with that expression of nothingness after suffering, of serenity *still living*, and already *of the next world*. One seems to really see him. The body, extended, laid out, annihilated, from which life has just fled, is most striking.

It is an emotion under which you totter.

Bastien is a very fortunate man. I am a little embarrassed

in his presence. With the physique of a young man of twenty-five, he has that benevolent and unassuming serenity that one sees in great men—Victor Hugo, for instance. I shall end by finding him handsome; in any case, he possesses that infinite charm of notable and powerful people who know it, without conceit and without silliness.

I look at him working while he is talking to Dina, and the others are in the adjoining room.

On the wall is seen the mark of the ball which killed Gambetta. He shows it to us; and then the calm of this room, the faded flowers, the sunshine through the window, in short, it makes me cry. . . . But he has his back turned, engrossed in his picture; so not to lose the benefit of this sensibility, I shake hands with him abruptly and go out quickly, with my face covered with tears. I hope that he has noticed it. It is silly . . . . yes, silly to own that one always thinks of the effect.



Monday, January 22nd.—For two months I have gone twice a week to the doctor, recommended by M. Duplay, who, as you may remember, had not time to attend me himself. The treatment which was, without fail, to have had beneficial results, has not had them. I am not better, but it is *hoped* that I shall not be worse. "And if you are no worse, you must think yourself fortunate!" It is hard.

Wednesday, January 24th.—After a crushing day's work at painting we go to see Etincelle. M. Bocher, the steward of the Orleans, is there, and two others, one of whom is tall and powerful, almost a Cassagnac, but spoiled by a double eye-glass. I have listened silently for twenty-five minutes to conversation about the horrors of the Revolution, the crimes of France since '89, &c.

It would have been too easy to reply, especially as I never close my eyes without having read two chapters of Michelet's

Revolution. When old Bocher goes, I commit the mistake, probably, of saying that I hold abominable opinions.

"What, you are a Republican?"

How can one call one's self a Republican in this drawing-room of pure Louis XVI., and with Etincelle in state in an arm-chair of white lacquer, in a *bleu de roi* velvet dress with panniers? With her comical but charming head, this woman is very agreeable.

I get out of it by saying that motives, intentions, faith are admirable . . . . that the most generous impulse, &c. In short . . . . that all parties have committed crimes . . . . to have for an excuse the prospective happiness of all . . . . that it is natural that at first one feels one's way, one is deceived, sometimes cruelly. . . . In fact, timidly, but in sufficiently precise terms, a modest apology for the Revolution . . . . resting on the sentimental side; and Etincelle consoles mamma by saying to her that whatever is generous and heroic in all this must needs find an echo in my young heart, &c., &c. Meanwhile the gentleman with the eye-glass remained, and uttered from time to time a word or a phrase in the style of Cassagnac; and, as we left, he said how much he had regretted not to have been able to come to our soirée (he had had an invitation through Saint-Amand). An exchange of lively compliments with mamma, and a flattering observation to me, with whom he is honoured, flattered enchanted to have made acquaintance. I reply with an inclination of the head.

Thursday, February 22nd.—The head of the smallest boy is entirely painted.

I play Chopin on the piano and Rossini on the harp, quite alone in the studio. The moonlight is lovely; the large window permits a view of the clear, blue, magnificent heaven. I think of my holy women and am so enraptured with the manner in which the picture presents itself to me

that I have a silly fear lest some one else should do it first. . . . This disturbs the profound calm of the evening.

There are enjoyments apart from everything; I am very happy this evening, I have just read *Hamlet* in English and have been lulled by the music of Ambroise Thomas.

There are eternally affecting dramas, immortal characters . . . . Ophelia . . . . Pale and fair.—That touches one's heart —Ophelia! One would like to experience an unfortunate love. Ah, Ophelia, flowers and death. . . . It is lovely!

There must be formulæ for reveries like this evening's, that is to say, that all the poetry which passes through my head should not be lost, but should form itself into a work. . . . . Can this journal be that work? . . . . No, it is too long. Ah! if God permitted me to do my picture, the true, the great one. This year, it will still be only a kind of study . . . . Inspired by Bastien?

Good God, yes; his painting so resembles nature that if one copies nature faithfully one is bound to resemble him.

The heads are living, it is not fine painting like Carolus, but painting; in short, it is human flesh and skin, it lives and breathes. There is neither dexterity, nor touch: it is nature itself and it is sublime.

Saturday, February 24th.—You know that I am constantly preoccupied with Bastien-Lepage; I have accustomed myself to pronounce this name, and I avoid pronouncing it before the world as if I had something to be ashamed of. And when I speak of him it is with a tender familiarity which seems natural to me considering his talent, but that might be misconstrued.

By heaven, what a pity it is that he cannot come as his brother does!

And what should I make of him? Why, a friend! What! you don't understand friendship! Ah! for my part I should adore my celebrated friends, not only out of vanity,

but by taste, on account of their qualities, of their wit, talent and genius; they are a race by themselves; after passing a certain vulgar level one finds one's self in a purer atmosphere, a circle of the elect, where we can take one another by the hand and dance a rondeau to the honour . . . What am I saying? Really Bastien has a charming head.

I am very much afraid that my painting resembles his . . . I copy nature very sincerely, I know, but I have his painting in my mind . . . Besides, a gifted artist who is sincerely charmed with nature and wishes to copy it, will always resemble Bastien.

If it goes on making as much progress . . . I shall have finished in four or five days, yes, but . . .

Sunday, February 25th.—It must be horrible, for I think I have done something good. For an instant I have been pleased with myself, and that has caused me a feeling of dread which still pursues me. Now if it is not very good it will be doubly miserable.

Tuesday, February 27th.—Well, there has been a series of lively days; I sing, talk and laugh, and Bastien-Lepage comes back again like a refrain. Neither his person, nor his figure, scarcely his talent. Nothing but the name . . . however, I am smitten with fear . . . If my picture should be like him? He has lately painted a lot of little boys and girls. The celebrated *Pas-mèche* among others, what can one see that is more beautiful?

Well, for my work. There are two street boys who are walking along a pavement holding each other by the hand; the eldest is seven years old and looks into space, before him, a leaf between his lips; the younger looks at the spectator, and has one hand in the pocket of his four-year-old boy's trousers. I do not know what to think, for I have again been pleased with myself this evening. It is truly fearful!

But this evening, this evening, is an hour of immense joy! "What," you will say to me, "Saint Marceaux or Bastien-Lepage have come?" No, but I have made the sketch for *my statue.*

You read aright. Directly after the 15th of March I want to make a statue. I have in my life sketched two groups, and two or three busts, all left half-finished . . . because, working alone and without direction, I can only attach myself to a thing which interests me, in which I place my life and soul, in fact, something . . . . not a simple studio study.

To conceive a figure, and to have an immense desire to execute it, that's it.

It will be bad. What does that matter? I am a born sculptor, I love form to adoration; colour can never give as much force as form, though I am as crazy about colour. But form! A charming movement, a fine attitude; you go round it, the outline changes while keeping the same meaning. . . .

Happiness! Delight!

My figure is a woman standing and weeping, her head in her hands. You know that movement of the shoulders when one cries.

I wanted to kneel before it. I said a thousand absurdities. The sketch is half a yard high, but the statue will be life-size. It will be a defiance to good sense. Really; why?

Well, I have torn up a beautiful cambric slip to wrap up this frail little statuette. I like this clay better than my skin.

And then I have not good eyes; if I can no longer see sufficiently well to paint, I will model.

It is so lovely; this white moistened linen covering up and draping with lovely folds this supple figure, which I see as it ought to be. I have wrapped it up respectfully; it is fine, delicate, and noble!

Wednesday, February 28th.—The picture will be finished

to-morrow, I shall have given nineteen days to it. If I had not repainted one of the boys, it would be already finished in fifteen days; but he seemed too old.

Saturday, March 3rd.—Tony has come to see the picture. He is highly pleased with it. One of the heads is very good.

"You have never done anything so good; it is supple and charming in tone. Capital, it's really good. Bravo! Mademoiselle." And so on for a long time. "Well, it is very good." I cannot believe that. The draperies remain to be done, and I also want to repaint the head of the little one, which is not bad, but not so good as the other. He seemed to think it really good. And yet I am not satisfied, it has not made me joyous. Another time I should have jumped all day long.

Then why am I not delighted? For he has never said so much before. It is not that I suspect him of flattery. Oh! no. I might have done still better; it seems to me so, at all events, and I am going to try and succeed with the second figure.

He is satisfied, evidently; I should like to know what he has said about it to the others.

Is it only relatively very good, very good for me, or is it really good? But I see beyond, much farther, better; I should like to do it over again. . . . I can do better. . . . Then?

Wednesday, March 14th.—Julian has at last come to see the picture; I did not ask him; there has only been an exchange of letters (full of squabbles) on both sides. But he feels culpable, and I triumph modestly.

He thinks it very good.

I keep him to lunch, like M. Grévy.

Thursday, March 15th.—There, it is done! At three o'clock I was still working, but everybody came, and I was

obliged to leave everything—Mme. and Mlle. Canrobert, Alice, Bojidar, Alexis, the Princess, Abbema, Mme. Kanchine! Tony R. F. came in the morning. All this company goes to Bastien's to see the picture *L'amour au Village.*—In an orchard is a young girl, seen from the back, with her head bent, and a flower in her hand, she is leaning against a fence; on this side of the fence is a young man, seen from the front, with his eyes lowered and looking at his fingers, which he is twisting. It is profoundly poetic and exquisite in sentiment.

As regards execution, there is none: it is nature itself. There is a little portrait of Mme. Drouet — the old guardian angel of Victor Hugo — which is a miracle of truth, feeling, and likeness. These pictures have no resemblance one to the other, even from a distance. They are living beings who pass before your eyes. He is not a painter, he is a poet, a psychologist, a metaphysician, a creator.

His own portrait, which is there in a corner, is a *chef-d'œuvre.* And yet he has not done his utmost: that is to say, one cannot do more or better than what he has done; but we expect a great picture from him, where he will attain such heights that henceforth no one will be able to deny his genius.

The girl seen from the back, with her two short plaits and her flower in her hand, is a poem.

No one has ever entered more fully into the reality of life than Bastien. Nothing is more lofty, more admirably human. The natural dimensions contribute to render the truth of his pictures still more striking. Whom will you mention to compare with him? The Italians? The painters of religious, and naturally conventional, subjects? Some of them are sublime, but necessarily mechanical, and then . . . . that does not touch your heart, soul, or mind The Spaniards? Brilliant and charming. The French? Brilliant, dramatic, or academic.

Millet and Breton are poets, no doubt; but Bastien is everything at once. He is the king of all, not only by his miraculous execution, but by his depth of intense feeling. It is impossible to push observation further, and the genius of observation is almost the whole of human genius, as Balzac has said. I am writing, seated on the ground, just before going to bed. I felt obliged to relate all that.

Thursday, March 22nd. — Yesterday I called in two experts, who have built up for the frame-work of the statue on a large scale from the little one that I made in clay. And to-day I have drawn it, and given it the desired movement. . . . I am very much taken with it. The picture of the holy women I will try to do this summer, and in sculpture my great idea is Ariadne. Meanwhile, I am doing this woman, who is, in fact, the upright figure—the figure of the other Mary in the picture: but in sculpture, without clothes, and taking a young woman, it would make an adorable Nausicaa. She has let her head fall between her hands, and she weeps. There is in the pose such real abandon—despair so complete, so young, so sincere, so sad, that I am very much taken with it.

Nausicaa, daughter of the king of the Phæacians, is one of the most charming figures of antiquity. A figure of secondary rank, but an attractive, touching, and interesting figure.

I am absolutely of Ouida's opinion, who would have liked to strangle old Penelope, and marry Ulysses to that ideal girl, leaning against a column of rose marble in her father's palace, and falling in love with that intriguing Ulysses at the recital of his adventures. No word is exchanged between them: he departs, the worthy citizen, to return to his country and his business. And Nausicaa remains on the shore, looking at the great white sail as

it passes away, and when everything, down to the blue horizon, is vacant, she lets her head fall upon her hands, and with her fingers on her face and in her hair, careless of her beauty, her shoulders raised, and her bosom crushed by her arms—she weeps.

Sunday, March 25th.—Since two o'clock yesterday I have been in a state of anxiety that will be understood when I have said why.

Villevielle comes to see me, and asks if I have any news from the Salon.

"No, certainly not."

"What! you know nothing?"

"Nothing."

"But you have passed?"

"I know nothing of it."

"No doubt, for they have only got to letter C."

And that is all. I write with difficulty. My hands tremble! I feel shattered all in pieces, so to say.

Then Alice comes and says, "You are accepted!"

"Accepted in what manner? Without a number?"

"Nothing is known of that yet."

I had no doubt about my admission.

And thereupon mamma, my aunt, and everybody else is in a state of disquietude, which worries me in the highest degree. I have made great efforts to be the same as usual and to receive people.

M. Laporte came, but I was dressing.

I sent forty messages, and five minutes afterwards I received a note from Julian which I copy exactly:—

"O simplicity, O sublime ignorance; I am going to dissipate you now.

"Accepted with No. 3 at least, for I know some one who wanted a No. 2 for you. And now that you are conqueror, greeting and felicitations."

I am not enraptured, but at least tranquil.

I do not think that No. 1 itself could give me pleasure, after twenty-four hours of humiliating anxieties. It is said that joy is keener after suffering. Not in my case. Difficulties, anxieties, sufferings, spoil everything for me.

Tuesday, March 27th.—I have just been looking into the Odyssey. Homer does not describe the scene that I have imagined. It is true that it must come as the logical and inevitable conclusion of the preceding actions; but, he does not give it. However, the speech, full of praise and admiration of Ulysses, when he meets Nausicaa, must inevitably have excited her; she explains the rest to her companions.

She takes him for a god, and he returns the compliment. . . . . So that's how it is.

I shall read again the words of Ulysses. When he appears naked and oozy before the young Phæacian girls they all take to flight, Nausicaa alone remains.

"It is Minerva who gives her this courage." This old man of the world, this old intriguer, still very handsome, wants clothes and protection, so he compares Nausicaa to Diana; therefore, she must be tall, elegant, and slender. "And his eyes," he says, "have never seen a mortal like her." He then compares her to a palm which rendered him mute with surprise at Delos, near the altar of Apollo, in a journey that he made there with a large number of followers, and this journey has been the source of his greatest misfortunes.

Thus in a few words he lavishes on her the most delicate flatteries, showing himself in a light at once poetic, majestic, and worthy of the most lively interest owing to his misfortunes; he seems persecuted by the gods.

To me it seems impossible that this young girl, whose intelligence and beauty make her the equal of the immortals, should not be seized by an extraordinary sentiment, especially

in the frame of mind into which she has been cast by her previous dream.

Friday, March 30th.—To-day I have worked until six o'clock; at six o'clock, as there is still daylight, I have opened the door of the balcony to hear the church bells and breathe the spring air while playing on the harp.

I am calm, I have worked well, then I washed, and dressed myself in white; I have played some music, and now I am writing; tranquil, satisfied, enjoying this interior arranged by myself, where I have everything to my hand; it would be so lovely to live this life . . . . awaiting fortune; and even if it came I would sacrifice two months a year to it, and for the other ten months I would remain shut up and working. . . . . It is the only way, besides, to get the two months in question. What torments me is that I shall have to marry. Then there would no longer be any of these base disquietudes of vanity from which I do not escape.

Why does she not marry? They say I am taken for five-and-twenty, and that enrages me; whereas once married . . . . Yes, but to whom? If I were, as once, in health . . . . But now it must be a man who is kind and delicate. He must love me, for I am not rich enough to marry one who would leave me quite to myself.

In all this I am taking no account of my own heart. One cannot foresee everything, and then it depends. . . . . And then, perhaps, it will never come to pass? . . . . I have just received the following letter:—

"*Palais des Champs-Elysées.*
"*Association of French Artists for the Annual Exhibition of Fine Arts.*

"MADEMOISELLE,—I am writing to you on the very table of the committee-room, to tell you that the head in pastel has met with a real success from the jury. I send you all

my congratulations on the occasion. I have no need to tell you that your paintings have been very well received.

"This year it is a real success for you, and I am rejoiced at it.

"With friendly greetings,

"TONY ROBERT FLEURY."

Ah, well! What then? . . . . The letter itself is going to be pinned up here; only it will be necessary for me to show it for a few days. Do *you* think that I am mad with joy? I am very calm. Doubtless I do not deserve to experience a great joy, since such a pleasant piece of news finds me in such a state of mind, that it all seems very ordinary. And since they write it to me, it loses all its value. If I knew of such a letter to Breslau, or to any other girl, I should be excessively disturbed at it. It is not that I value only what I have not got, but it is through excessive modesty. I have no confidence; if I believed it as it stands, I should be too satisfied; so I am cautious, like one who fears that "it can't be true, because it is too good." . . . I fear to rejoice too soon . . . . and for something trifling; *in short* . . . .

Saturday, March 31st.—But I have been with Julian this morning to have the pleasant things repeated to me. It appears that Bouguereau said to him:

"You have a Russian girl who has sent something which is not bad, not bad."

"And you know," adds Julian, "that in Bouguereau's mouth this is enormous when it does not concern his pupils."

At all events, it seems that I shall have something like an honourable mention.

Sunday, April 1st.—I go to the Louvre this morning with Brisbane (Alice). Not that she is very interesting, as

Breslau, for instance, would have been. There is no exchange of ideas; but she is good, and fairly intelligent; she listens to me, and I think aloud. It is an exercise. I talk of what interests me, and of what I should desire. Of Bastien, naturally, for he has taken an enormous place in my conversations with Julian and Alice. I like his painting extraordinarily, and I shall seem to you very blinded if I tell you that those old dusky paintings in the Louvre make me think with pleasure of the living pictures bathed in air, with speaking eyes, and with mouths just about to open.

Well, that is my impression this morning, I do not give it as final.

I cough, and though I do not get thinner it seems to me that I am ill, only I do not want to think of it. But why then have I such a healthy look, not only in colour, but in size?

I look for the cause of my sadness and I find nothing, unless it be that I have hardly done anything for a fortnight.

The statue is spoiling and cracking; all this has made me lose an infinity of time.

To-morrow, at one o'clock, I recommence work; without that I am not myself.

What vexes me rather is, that this pastel should be so good, and that the pictures are simply *good*. Well, I feel able to paint as well as that now . . . . and you shall see! . . . I am not sad, I am simply feverish, with a difficulty in breathing. It is the right lung which . . . . is getting worse.

Oh! fool that you are! you see yourself burning, so to say, and you do nothing! Blisters! yellow stains for a year or two!

But what are two years compared with life, beauty, and work.

Well! Well! There is not even any great need of this shoulder, and I can drape myself so well . . . . And what next . . . . I always think that it will pass away somehow.

Tuesday, April 3rd.—It is very fine. I feel that I have strength; I think that I can do fine painting. I feel it; I am sure of it.

The sun, spring-time, open air, that is the best season. In summer one must escape from the heat, and in winter from the cold; in summer there is nothing lovely but the mornings and evenings; but at present it is a paradise, and if I don't profit by it to paint in the open air, I am much to blame.

To-morrow, then . . . .

I feel within me the power to render whatever strikes me. I feel a new force, a confidence in myself, which trebles my faculties. To-morrow I am going to begin a picture which charms me; then, by and by, in the autumn, during the bad weather, another one also very interesting. It seems to me that now every stroke will tell, and I feel an incomparable transport in consequence.

Red-letter day — Wednesday, April 4th. — Six street children grouped, their heads close to one another, half length only. The eldest is about twelve, and the youngest six. The tallest, seen almost from the back, holds a nest, and the others are looking on, in various and suitable attitudes.

The sixth is a little girl of four, seen from the back, her head raised, and her arms crossed. The description may sound commonplace, but, in reality, all these heads together produce something excessively interesting.

Sunday, April 15th.—My disease plunges me into a state of prostration which makes me wretched. Julian writes to me that the picture is not yet hung; that Tony cannot promise me (*sic*) the line; but as I am not yet hung . . . what can be done will be done. That Tony has great hopes (*sic*) of some slight recompense, *embracing painting* (*sic*) and pastel. Only two months ago I was expecting no

such thing, and I remain insensible as if it did not concern me. This honourable mention, which was to make me feel faint, now I am told that "it is probable, almost certain," surprises me as if I had never believed in it. And, at the same time, it appears to me that I shall not faint at all. Life is logical, and prepares us for the coming events; this is what I regret. I should like a thunderbolt: the medal to fall from the sky without crying "Look out!" plunging me in an ocean of felicity. Yes, that would leave me calm now, and I should be stunned by it like . . . .

Thou didst not then believe in it when thou wert reckoning upon it.

Wednesday, April 18*th.*—Do you know what I am doing? I am entering into a competition at Julian's. A woman's figure clothed, and her hands. It is very ugly; but, as the men's studios also will do this competition, there is the impossible hope of beating men, and so I've started.

Only think, there are some who have taken separate boxes. It will be judged in a month, for the four studios are going to do the same figure, each in its turn.

If I have an honourable mention this year, I shall have made more rapid progress than Breslau, who, before going to Julian's, had done serious work. In short . . . . I have just been playing the piano. I commenced by the two divine marches of Chopin and Beethoven, and then I played at haphazard I don't know what, and things so entrancing that I am listening to myself still. How curious! I could not recall a single note now, and if I wanted to improvise I could not do so. The hour, the minute, or something is wanting. And what divine melodies are floating through my brain just now! If I had any voice, I should sing enchanting, unheard-of, dramatic things. . . . . Why? . . . . Life is too short. One has no time to do anything! I should like to model without ceasing to paint. It is not so much that I want to produce

sculpture; but I *see* lovely things, and I feel the imperious need of rendering what I *see.*

I have learned to paint, but I have not painted because I wanted to do such or such a picture. And now I am going to model in clay to give body to my visions.

Sunday, April 22nd.—Only two pastels have got No. 1—Breslau's and mine. Breslau's painting is not on the line, but her portrait of the daughter of the editor of the *Figaro* is. Neither is my painting on the line, but Tony Robert Fleury declares that it is in good view, and that the picture below is not large. Irma's head is on the line and in a corner; therefore, a place of honour. So he says I am well placed.

As there are people to dinner almost every evening, I listen and say to myself, "Here are people who do nothing, and who spend their life in saying silly things or talking scandal; are they happier than I?" . . . . Their worries are different, but they suffer as much, and they do not enjoy anything as much as I do. They miss a multitude of things—trifles, subtleties, effects of light—which yield me subjects of observation and delight, unknown to the vulgar; but I am more prone than most people to contemplation of the splendours of nature, as well as of the thousand details of Paris: of a passenger, an expression of the eyes in a child or a woman, a placard, and what not. How suggestive to visit the Louvre, to cross the court, to mount the staircase by the track made by the millions of feet which have trodden it, to open that door; to imagine the histories of the people I meet there, follow them into their inner being, picture their lives to myself in a moment; then other thoughts, other impressions, and it is all connected and all diverse. There is subject for . . . . How do I know? And if, since I sometimes hear less well, I am inferior to every one else, there are perhaps compensations.

Oh! no. Everybody knows it, and the first thing that must be said when I am mentioned is, "Do you know she is rather deaf?" I can't imagine how I can write it down. . . . Can one get accustomed to such misery? Let it happen to an old man, to an old woman, to a miserable wretch; but to a young being, living, thrilling, mad for life!

Friday, April 27*th.*—Tony came to see me yesterday, and stayed for an hour. They have spoken about my large picture, and the aforesaid Tony entertains serious fears.

He gives me great encouragement to do the six boys. It is very difficult, but after all I have only to copy. "One has nothing to do but copy!" "Copy?" It is easily said; but to copy without an artistic conception, without an *inward idea*, is dull indeed. But it is needful to copy with the mind just as much as with the eyes. I do not say all that to Tony. He would understand it, but he would tack on to it ideas of classical *interpretation* that I vehemently reject. After all, he says that . . . . in a picture of that order there are things to be known of which I have no notion. For example, the draperies. . . . *Quesaco?*

"Very well, Monsieur, I will do my draperies, since there are draperies, as I do the modern clothes."

"That will be frightful."

"But why? Were not the people I am going to paint living and modern?"

"Yes, but there are things in art that must be known. You cannot do draperies anyhow! You must arrange them."

"Cannot I, an artist, arrange draperies of 1883 in my own fashion? Am I to copy them without choosing? Is not choice one of the artist's prerogatives?"

"Just so; but you will not find your picture ready made in nature."

I do not reply; it might lead to my saying something foolish to him. But then . . . . I shall not find my picture ready made in nature. Ah, indeed! What does that matter?

But my picture is in my head. And nature will provide me with the means of executing it. . . .

It is clear that a certain feeling must govern all this. . . . If I possess this feeling, all will go well, but if I do not possess it, no studies of draperies will give it to me.

I want a landscape nearly like that I imagine, and it is not intricate.

And I want two women, whom I have found—one, the pale one, is astonishing: the other is also capital.

And then? And then I want a place somewhere in the country, and fine weather to do my figures. And the landscape can be done after studies brought from the south.

And then? The difficulty is that I shall not do it this year.

I shall only be able to go there in November; and unless I do it entirely there, I shall have to wait until the summer to execute it.

Now, I feel a profound and irresistible conviction that it will be beautiful! And it is certain, too, that one's strength increases tenfold when one works *con amore*.

It seems to me that a certain impulse can make up for almost everything. I will give you proofs of it. For instance, for six or seven years I have given up playing the piano, and except for just a few pieces occasionally, I have remained for months without touching it, and then played, all at once, for five or six hours in the day once a year. Under those conditions, one's touch is gone, so I can play nothing before people, and any school-girl could beat me.

Well, then, if I hear a masterpiece, like Chopin's march, or Beethoven's, if I am taken with it, and filled with the desire to play it, in a few days — in two or three days— and by playing an hour a day at most, I succeed in playing it quite excellently—as well as anybody, as Dusawtois, who gained the first prize at the Conservatoire, and who *practises*.

Saturday, April 28th.—The Russian Easter.

Sunday, April 29th.—Varnishing day to-morrow. My picture is not on the line, and my dress is ugly, and . . . .

Come, this is foolish and unworthy of me. Here is the truth: I have to do my six boys, life-size, standing at the corner of the street, near a lamp. I shall be interrupted for a month by the Russian tour, after which I shall come back and finish them; this will probably bring me to October. In October I start for Jerusalem, and I shall stay there. That will depend. If there is any means of doing the picture there, I will stay for three or four months; if not, I will stay there for a month, and return in November-December with some studies, to set out again for the south, where I shall be able to paint my figures in the open air, making use of the landscapes brought back with me. In January, it will take me to Paris, where I will do the painting of the interior, less than life-size, for which I brought the idea from Mont-Dore— the choir-boy.

I shall at the same time press forward the statue, on which I shall be able to work all the time at Paris, that is to say, July, August, September, and January, February, and March. However, I do not think that the choir-boy will be done if I do the holy women, and *vice versâ*.

They may truly say that I waste myself, that I spend my strength, and exhaust myself for trifles, and that it is a great pity. What, it depends upon me to be strong, and I cannot!

Come then, let us see!

The attempt must be made. I want to concentrate myself.

Monday, April 30th.—I have the pleasure of talking with Bastien-Lepage. He has explained his Ophelia to me. Well!

He is not an every-day artist of ordinary talent. He conceives his subject in a truly typical manner. What he told me about it was drawn from the inmost recesses of the soul. It is indeed fine to understand art after this fashion; to feel it as he feels. Ophelia is not simply a crazy girl in his eyes, she is love's martyr, and represents immense disenchantment, bitterness, despair, the end of everything—love's martyr, with a touch of madness. It is the most touching, saddest, most despairing figure. . . .

I am crazy about it. How glorious is genius! This little plain man seems more beautiful and more attractive than an angel. You would like to spend your life in listening to him, and in following him in his sublime works. After all, he speaks so simply. He replied to something that was said to him, "I find so much poetry in nature," with an accent of such frank sincerity that I feel penetrated by its inexpressible charm. I exaggerate, I feel that I exaggerate. But, after all, there's something in it.

Then we go out together, and there is a charming moment, before leaving, when we all meet—Carolus, Tony R. F., Jules Bastien, Emile Bastien, Carrier-Belleuse, Edelfeldt, and Saint Marceaux.

Tuesday, May 1st.—And the Salon? Well, it is worse than usual.

Dagnan has not exhibited; Sargent is mediocre; Gervex ordinary; Henner enchanting. It is a nude woman reading. Artificial light, and the whole bathed in a sort of vapour, but of a tone so perfectly adorable that one feels quite

enveloped in this marvellous, magical vapour. Jules Bastien admires it immensely. A picture by Cazin, which I do not like as well as his touching landscapes; it is Judith leaving the town to go to Holofernes. I have not looked enough at it to undergo "the charm which must exhale from it"; but what strikes you is that Judith's appearance does not excuse the infatuation of Holofernes.

Bastien-Lepage's picture does not carry me away completely. The two figures are irreproachable. His girl seen from the back, the head—of which only the cheek is visible—and that hand twisting a flower, all show poetry, sentiment, and observation carried to the last degree.

That back is a poem; the hand, which is scarcely seen, a masterpiece. One feels what he wanted to express. The girl lowers her head a little, and does not know what to do with her feet, which have a pose of charming embarrassment. The young man is excellent, too; but the girl is grace, youth, poetry itself. It is true, correct, and deeply felt; it is fine and delicate!

But the landscape is quite disagreeable. Leaving alone that the place need not have been so green, it should have been executed in such a manner as not to mix with the foreground. It wants air. Why? They say that the background is pasty. At all events it is heavy.

And Breslau? Breslau is good, but one feels dissatisfied. For though the painting is good, the picture tells you nothing: it is pretty, but common, in tone. People drinking tea near the hearth. A bourgeois interior, without character. A dark girl, a fair one, and a young man. They look very grave. It wants the feeling of home. I should have thought it would have been more concentrated and more domestic. It expresses nothing. She who talks so much of feeling does not appear to me gifted in that line. . . . Her portrait is good, but that is all.

And myself?

Well, Irma's head is pleasing, and the painting is pretty vigorous. But there is little in it.

And the picture appeared to me sombre, and though it was painted in the open air, does not look like it. The wall does not look like a wall—it is a painted sky, a canvas, anything you please. The heads are good, but this background is disastrous. However, it deserves a better place, especially when one sees such inferior things on the line. Everybody agrees in saying that the heads are very good, especially that of the eldest. It is probable that I might have been able to do the rest better, for it is comparatively easy, but I had not time.

On looking at my picture as it hung there, I have learnt more than in six months at the studio. The Salon is a great teacher. . . . I have never understood it so well.

Wednesday, May 2nd.—I was to have gone to the Opera, but what's the good of it? That is to say, I thought for a moment of going, in order that it might reach Bastien's ears that I had looked beautiful. But what for? I don't know. After all, it's silly! Is it not absurd that I should please people I don't care at all about? and that in return . . . .

I must have a care, especially as I should have my labour for my pains, for after all I have no serious designs against this great artist. Should I marry him? No; well, what then?

After all, why always probe the most hidden depths? I have a wild, crazy desire to please this great man, and that's all. And Saint Marceaux, too. Which of them most? It doesn't matter. One of them would be enough for me. It is an interest . . . . in life. My face is changed by it—I look much prettier; my skin is smooth, fresh, velvety, my eyes lively and brilliant.

After all, it is curious. What could real love do when such silly trifles produce this effect.

Friday, May 4th.—After all, that is not the question. Jules Bastien dined here this evening. I acted neither the child nor the wild girl—I was neither foolish nor mischievous. He was simple, gay, charming. We had some fun. Not an irksome moment. He is very intelligent, but I do not allow of specialities for genius. A man of genius can be and must be everything he wishes.

And he is lively. I feared that I should find him insensible to pleasantry, which, to be subtle, must hit the just mean between wit and nonsense. In short, like Roland's mare, he has every good quality. . . . Except that he is dead . . . . or little short of it. Is it not ridiculous?

Sunday, May 6th.—Quite a sensation about young Rochegrosse's large picture.

Astyanax, the son of Andromache, is being torn from her to be cast from the ramparts.

It is the antique treated in an original and *modern* manner.

He follows nobody, and draws his inspiration from no one. Colour and painting are of unparalleled vigour. There is at present no one else who could do it. Add to this that he is the son-in-law of Théodore de Banville—hence the crush.

After all, notwithstanding this detail, he is of prodigious power. He is only twenty-four, and it is his second exhibit.

It is just what it should be—composition, drawing, colour are of incomparable dash.

His talent corresponds to his name. Listen: Rochegrosse, *Georges Rochegrosse*. It has the roll of thunder.

And after the idyllic *Bastien-Lepage* Georges Rochegrosse comes on you like a torrent; it is possible that later on his talent will take a more compressed form, and that he will seek after the quintessence of feeling and psychology like Bastien-Lepage.

And myself? . . . what does my name express? *Marie Bashkirtseff* . . . I will change it, for it has a certain strange and harrowed effect, though not without promise of brilliancy; it has even a certain style—something proud and stirring, but it is jerky and uneasy. Is not Tony Robert Fleury as cold as an epitaph? And Bonnat sounds correct and vigorous, but limited and without lustre. Manet sounds like an incomplete being, a pupil full of promise at fifty. Breslau is sonorous, calm, powerful. Saint Marceaux is like Bashkirtseff, very nervous but less troubled. Henner is mysterious and calm, with an indefinable grace like the antique . . .

Carolus Duran is a disguise. Dagnan is subtle, close, clever, gentle and strong, but with not much else. Sargent makes one think of his painting, a counterfeit Velasquez of the counterfeit Carolus, less than Velasquez, but good all the same.

Monday, May 7th.—I am beginning the boys all over again; I am making them life-size, on a much larger canvas; it is more entertaining.

Tuesday, May 8th.—I live in my art, going down to dinner and speaking to nobody.

I feel that I have entered upon a new phase.

Everything looks small and devoid of interest, everything outside of what one produces. Life might be lovely, taken thus.

Wednesday, May 9th.—This evening we have a special

set, which would much shock our customary society, but which amuses me excessively.

Jules Bastien does not waste himself, he who so strongly preaches economy of mind, strength, and everything in order to concentrate all upon one point. Well! I think that in me there is such an exuberance *of everything* that if I did not expend myself I could not endure it. No doubt if conversation or laughter exhausts you, you do well to abstain . . . However, he must be right.

We go up to the studio, and of course my great canvas is turned against the wall, and I almost fight with Bastien to prevent him from seeing it, for he had wedged himself between the canvas and the wall.

I exaggerate Saint Marceaux, and Jules Bastien says that he is jealous of him and that he is going to *oust* him little by little.

He repeated it several times, and the other day also; well, if it be only a pleasantry it enraptures me.

He must think that Saint Marceaux is more adored than he is, artistically speaking of course. I am always asking him:—"You like him, too, do you not?"

"Yes, very much."

"Do you like him as much as I do?"

"Ah! no, I am not a woman; I like him, but . . ."

"But it is not as a woman that I like him!"

"Nevertheless there is something of that in your admiration."

"No, no, I swear to you."

"Yes, yes, it is unconscious!"

"Ah! can you think! . . ."

"Yes, and I am jealous of him; I am not a fine dark fellow . . ."

"He is like Shakespeare."

"You see . . ."

The real Bastien is going to hate me! Why? I don't

know; I am afraid of him. We are hostile one to the other, there are inexplicable trifling things that one feels. We are not *in sympathy,* and I hesitate to say things before him which might make him . . . perhaps like me a little.

We think alike about art, and I do not dare to speak before him. Is it because I feel that he does not like me? After all, there is something. . . . .

Saturday, May 12th.—I spend the morning at the studio talking with the ladies, and I catch Julian for an instant to beg him to come and see the boys.

You understand, I do not want advice, but only the public impression; now Julian represents the thinking majority.

He has come to dinner, the canvas has had to be brought from the Home; he has seen both. First, the boys; there are six of them; there is a tall one, almost seen from the back, showing something he has in his hand to the other five who are grouped round him. The street is seen for some distance, and in the distance two or three little girls who are going away. He insists roundly on my taking out the lamp which was in the left-hand corner; he is right. As regards the rest, he thinks that it is original, amusing; and that it is *almost* certain to be a success—much better than the two boys of the Salon, especially the knavish side of the chief boy, who is almost a youth, one of those whom the little ones call big fellows.

This evening Julian has been perfect, serious, delicate, and kind. He did not tease or chaff me, and when I call his attention to it, he says it depends upon what I show him, and that I am in a fair way to make a fresh start.

We talked of the holy women. I explain to him how I understand it. We had a good laugh at T. R. F.'s draperies. Can these women have lovely draperies of blue or maroon cashmere? They followed Jesus for months, they were the

revolutionary women, the Louise Michels, the reprobates of those times; they were outside the pale of elegance and fashion.

And during the days that the great drama—the judgment and the crucifixion—lasted, can they have been otherwise than in rags, or nearly so? Julian says that it may be either sublime or a failure. And that I must look well to the Magdalen, for I want to put a world into that figure, and . . . . in that class the greatest artists have experienced failures.

However, I have started! My picture is there! It is quite finished; I see it and feel it. Nothing in the world would change anything in it; no journey, no scenery, no advice. The effect as sketched pleases Julian. But it is not yet what I want. I know at what hour it must take place: at the hour when the outlines become confused, the calmness contrasting with what has just taken place, and, in the distance, some human figures are going away after having buried Christ; only the two women have remained, sunk in stupor. The Magdalen, in profile; her elbow on her right knee and her chin in her hand, with an eye that sees nothing, fixed on the entrance to the sepulchre, her left knee touching the ground and her left arm hanging down.

The other Mary is standing a little to the back; her head in her hands and her shoulders raised; only her hands are visible, and the pose must reveal an outburst of tears, of weariness, of relapse, of despair; her head is buried in her hands, and her body shows a state of utter collapse and complete loss of strength. All is over. Julian thinks that this impulse is very fine; that she does not trouble herself about the people; that she is there for herself, given up to her wretchedness.

The woman sitting down will be the most difficult. She must express stupor, amazement, despair, prostration, and rebellion. And it is this rebellion which is the most delicate thing to render. A world, a world!

And it is I who undertake that! Well, yes, it is I, and it depends only on me, and it is impossible not to do it, if God wills. Ah! He must know that I fear Him, and that I fall on my knees to pray Him to allow me to work. I do not deserve either favour or help, but only that He will let me alone.

But it might be a failure, a failure in the eyes of the public it will, none the less, be a lovely thing.

And I shall have my boys to console me.

It will be too lovely!

My Salon picture does not interest me. I did it for want of a better, being short of time.

Tuesday, May 15th.—But that is not the question. What is, then? . . . That it is fine, that the moon is lovely, that the sky is beautiful, that the stars make one think of a picture by Cazin, and that there is nothing besides art. My mind is at ease at not having to go away again, and to be able to finish the boys, then the fisher, and then the boy reading on a bench, and then paint about a score of sunsets. . . .

Wednesday, May 16th.—It is so warm that one is alive only in the evening. I return home, highly delighted with all these quiet rooms, with the infinite sky.

However, spring does not induce sentiment, but childlike trifling.

One hears the railway whistle, and the church bell of the Rue Brémontier. . . . It is very poetic. . . .

On these lovely evenings there ought to be trips into the country, on the water; to the devil with society; what society? . . I think of all this, Paris of the Champs-Elysées, and of the Bois, which lives . . . . while I—am yonder, in America. Am I doing well or ill to throw away my youth as food for ambitions, which. . . . In short, shall I receive the interest on the capital invested?

The whistle is very harmonious in the night. A number

of people are coming back from the country tired, dreamy, happy, drunk, exhausted.

Always the whistle. . . .

When I am celebrated . . . . and that will perhaps be in a year's time. . . . I am very patient, as if I were sure. . . .

The whistle, continually . . . . and it is said when one hears the whistle in this way, that the weather is stormy, and that makes me think of what Domingo says in *Paul and Virginia,* about the storm which is on the point of bursting.

Very difficult to read Balzac in this state of mind; but I will read nothing by any one else, so as not to excite my head.

Still the bell and the whistle.

Friday, May 18*th.*—To desire Bastien-Lepage's friendship so much is to give too great an importance to that sentiment, to disfigure it, so to say, and to place myself in a false and disproportionate position in my own eyes. This friendship would have been very agreeable to me, like that of a Cazin or of a Saint Marceaux; but I am vexed at having thought of his private life, and, in short, he is not glorious enough for that. He is not an artist-god, as Wagner has just been; it is only under those conditions that the idea of great admiration would be admissible.

What I aim at is to have an interesting salon, and every time this hope begins to be realised some distraction occurs. Just now mamma has started off, papa is dying, perhaps.

I had the project of giving a dinner once a week, followed by a reception for society people on Thursday, for instance, and on Saturday another dinner for artists; the principal celebrities would also appear at the Thursday receptions, having dined on the preceding Saturday. . . .

And then all has gone adrift. . . . But I will begin again next year; calm, as though I were strong; patient, as though I were eternal; and persevering, as though I were encouraged.

Now, let God remain neutral, and I will be as grateful to Him for it as for a benefit.

Friday, May 18th.—I am going to paint a decorative panel: Spring. A woman leaning against a tree, with her eyes closed, and smiling as in a lovely dream; and all around a delicate landscape, tender green, pale roses, apple-trees and peach-trees in blossom, fresh shoots, all that renders spring so enchanting in its colour.

It has never been done faithfully. Spring landscapes have been recently painted, but old people or washer-women or lepers have been introduced into them. But what I want is an exclusive use of "enchanting tones."

Thousands of spring-times have been done—card-board copies—executed with tact. Bastien is the only one who might have thought as I do, and he has not yet done so. This woman must have the appearance of feeling all the harmonies of tone, of odour, and of the song of birds. There must be sunshine in it. Bastien has only painted open-air grey and in shadow.

I want sun in it, and I will do it at Nice in an orchard, and if I find a very poetic orchard the woman shall be nude.

One must hear the murmur of the brook which runs at her feet, as at Granda, amid tufts of violets, with patches of sunshine here and there.

I shall ask spring for tones which sing to the soul. I must have tender, ravishing greens, and pale, enchanting pinks, and no dull, yellowish tints.

A revelry of sweet notes! It must be of enchanting colour, with patches of sunshine which come here and there, and give life and a certain beginning of mystery to the shade.

Do you understand?

But Bastien is doing, or going to do, the burial of a

girl. Now, if he is intelligent, he will use for the scenery a landscape such as I imagine. I hope that he will not have so much penetration, and that he will treat us to a landscape in atrocious green. . . . However, I should be vexed if he did not make a sublime picture of this subject.

And I hope that he has had my ideas, though hoping at the same time that he has not got them. . . . I, however, see his burial of a girl in a flowery meadow, with fruit-trees in blossom, or roses from which one could pick the leaves, and coarse heads of peasants as contrasts. All the poetry will be concentrated in the coffin and in the landscape.

I will not talk to him about anything.

Sunday, May 20th.—Mamma has arrived on Thursday night or Friday morning. We had a telegram on Saturday, in which she says that my father's health is wretched. To-day his valet writes that his condition is hopeless.

They say he suffers a great deal. I am glad that mamma arrived in time.

To-morrow the Salon is to be closed for three days to make the awards. It re-opens on Thursday.

I dreamed that a coffin was placed upon my bed, and they said there was a girl inside it. And it shone like phosphorus in the night. . . .

Tuesday, May 22nd. — I work until half-past seven. But at every sound, every ring at the bell, every barking of Coco, my heart sinks to my heels. How true that expression is! It occurs also in Russian. It is nine o'clock in the evening, and no news. There are emotions for you! If I get nothing, it will be very tiresome. They have said so much beforehand at the studio — and Julian, Lefebvre, and Tony among them, all together — that it is

impossible for me not to have it. But it is not at all kind: they might have sent me word by telegraph—one never hears good news soon enough. . . . If . . . . if I had got anything, I should know it by this time. What then?

It gives me a slight headache.

Not, however, because it is so important, but it has been given out . . . . and then, too, uncertainty is odious in everything.

And my heart beats and beats. . . . Wretched life! All and everything and nothing. . . . And all for what? To end in death!

Mme. X—— died, after severe sufferings, in the midst of her sorrowing family. M. Z—— died suddenly at his château in ——. There was nothing to announce such a premature end. . . . Or again—Mme. Y—— has been removed from the tender care of her relatives. She was ninety-nine years of age. . . .

And nobody escapes it! . . . . And everyone ends like that.

To end! To end! To exist no longer! There's the horror. To have enough genius to live for ever! . . . . Or to write silly things with feverish hand, because the announcement of a wretched honourable mention has to be waited for.

A letter has just come; my heart stops beating. It is from Doucet, about a bodice.

I am going to take a little laudanum again to calm myself. To see this agitation, one would say that I had just been dreaming about my holy women. The picture is sketched; when I work at it or think about it I am in just such a state as I am this evening.

I feel incapable of doing anything! . . . .

A quarter past nine. *Impossible* that the prudent Julian should have been so positive, and that it should

not come to pass! . . . . But, on the other hand, this silence? . . . .

It affects my legs; and is like a flame which envelops the whole body and burns the cheeks. . . . . I have had bad dreams. . . . .

It is only twenty-five minutes past nine.

Julian ought to have come; he should have come, he knew it about six o'clock; he should have come to dinner. Is there nothing then?

I believed that I had been refused, and that was not at all probable. But in this case it is very probable.

I have been watching the vehicles; they pass by. . . . . Oh! it is too late now.

There is no medal of honour for painting, and Dalou has obtained the one for sculpture.

What does that matter to me?

Should I have given Bastien the medal of honour? No. He can do something better than that *Amour au Village*, so he does not deserve it. They might have given it to him for his sublime *Jeanne d'Arc*, the landscape of which displeased me three years ago.

I should like to see it again.

Thursday, May 24th.—I have it, and am re-assured and at rest; I do not say happy, I might say satisfied. . . . .

I learn it through the papers; those gentlèmen did not take the trouble to write a word.

Listen to history. I believe in, "Nothing happens either as you fear, or as you hope."

I was wondering how it would happen, shall I have it or shall I not; I know the effect produced, because the day before yesterday and yesterday evening I thought I had not got it. And if I have, well, it will be very pleasant. I can perfectly imagine what it would . . . . be like. What is going to happen, then? From which side will the surprise come?

To have it without having it, and not to have it though having it.

At half-past nine o'clock we go to the Salon, and at our door we meet Bojidar, beaming radiantly, with his father, coming to congratulate me. We take the young man with us. When I reach my room, I see my picture in a different place; it has been put higher, above a large picture of tulips of a blinding colour, and signed by a ninth-rate artist. Then the presentiment that the inscription, *Honourable mention,* would be attached to Irma seems possible; I run to it.

At last I go to the odious pastel and find it there.

I make but one leap to Julian's, and remain there for more than half an hour, scarcely able to speak. I could have cried. He seems very much astonished. How is it? for since the opening of the Salon, since my pictures had been seen, there had been no more question about the pastel; and then he had felt sure that I should be moved and placed on the line.

In fact, the reward, even when granted in another section, seems to be a protection against being skyed in this way! He seems most sympathetic as he writes pressing and persuasive messages to Cot, Lefebvre, and Tony R. F. But it is very late. "Honourable mention," for the pastel—it is absurd! Yet, let it pass! But to sky my picture! It makes me cry all alone in my room as I write it.

"Honourable mention" to the pastel is an insult, a stupidity, an annoyance . . . . but to displace the picture. . . .

I take God and all honourable people as witnesses. Last year second medals were given to pictures far inferior to mine. And this year, too, every one will tell you that it is true. I am considered to have good ground for my indignation.

I can't conceive so much bad faith, such underhand dealings! I can't understand this artistic electoral kitchen.

It is infamous. When shall I be as vulgar-minded as the others, and cease to be indignant at these things? I allow that real talent will show itself. Agreed. But one must be launched, to begin with.

Bastien-Lepage himself was supported at first by his master, M. Cabanel.

When a pupil is promising, his master ought to hold his head above the water for an instant. If he keeps afloat, he is somebody; if not, so much the worse for him. Oh! I shall succeed.

Only this is a hindrance, and not through my fault.

Not to make use of certain advantages is as revolting as an injustice!

Bojidar and Dina went to the administration to protest, but of course it was in vain. Bojidar pilfered the famous inscription and brought me this piece of cardboard with the words *Honourable Mention.* I immediately fastened it on Coco's tail, who was so frightened that he was afraid to move. In short, I am distressed, vexed, and unhappy. My picture being skyed is excruciating. But to those around me my despair was an amusing sight; I am always affording people amusement, and when I feel inclined to cry, I say funny things; one must not tire people, one must always be a diversion, a novelty . . . . I appear to be so because I wish it.

Friday, June 1st.—The boys who are sitting to me exasperate me to madness! I have their parents' authority to smack them, and to-day I seized one of them and flung him to the ground like a parcel—perfectly enraged. And then? . . . And then nothing.

Wednesday, June 6th.—I am crushed to the ground by my ears. (What a fine simile.) You will understand my sufferings when I tell you that the days when I can hear well are

like happy events. Can you grasp the horror of such a preoccupation!

And my nerves are over-excited, really to an extraordinary degree! My work suffers from it; I paint, being all the time consumed by imaginary apprehensions. I imagine a number of horrors; my imagination runs away with me; I sustain every kind of ignominy; I invent obloquies, fearing to see them come true. I go on painting, and I think of what may be said of me, and I invent such horrors that I sometimes start up and go to the other end of the garden like a lunatic, uttering indignant exclamations. Ah! this must produce nice painting! I ought to take some shower baths. And to-night I am going to write to mamma to remind her of the embassy, or I shall go mad; it is begun.

Sunday, June 10th.—As there is no risk of meeting anybody at the Salon on Sunday, I go there in the morning.

There are really some abominably unjust rewards.

There is always a crowd before the new picture of young Rochegrosse. It is unquestionably very powerful, but leaves me unimpressed. But what does not leave me so?

To feel emotion I must get up the steam first, and then by dint of trying I attain a great state of exaltation . . . which is factitious. Still there's Jeanne d'Arc . . . Yes, it is true, and then? And a few other things too.

At the Louvre? Well, there are the portraits; as for those big ancient things . . . . but the portraits and the delicious things of the French school!

And at the last exhibition of portraits of the century, there were those of Lawrence and two or three by Bastien: the one of his brother, of André Theuriet, of Sarah. And then . . . . and then, who told you that I am an artist in painting?

Driven in another direction, except in mathematics, I should have reached the same point by the force of intelligence and will.

But I have a passion for music, I could compose with ease. Then why paint? But what to put in its place? It is miserable to have such thoughts.

I want to paint a great picture, and large in size. I am looking for a subject . . . I have an ancient one: Ulysses telling his adventures to the king of the Phæacians, Alcinous. Alcinous and the queen are on their throne, surrounded by princes and young people and their household. The scene is laid in a gallery with rose-coloured pillars. Nausicaa, leaning against one of these pillars a little way behind her parents, is listening to the hero. It is after the feast and the song of the poet Demodocus who is right in the background, and is looking out of doors, with his lute resting on his knees, in a state of indifference, like a singer who no longer obtains a hearing. In all this, there are attitudes, groups, and in fact composition.

That is not what troubles me, that will be all right; but to *carry it out*—there's the rub.

I know nothing—no, nothing! furniture, costumes, accessories. And then to do such a large thing, what researches are necessary! . . . And one must know what Tony Robert Fleury calls the qualities or the . . . What?

Monday, June 11*th*.—My father is dead.

The telegram was received this morning at ten o'clock, that is to say just this instant. My aunt and Dina downstairs were saying that mamma must come back at once without waiting for the funeral. I came up here, very much moved, but not crying. But when Rosalie came to show me the arrangement of a dress, I said to her, "It is not worth while, Monsieur is dead," and I began to cry without restraint. Am I guilty of any wrongs against him? I don't

think so. I have always tried to be amiable . . . but at such a time one always feels guilty of something . . . I ought to have gone with mamma . . . He was only fifty. So much suffering! . . . and having, in short, done no harm to anybody. Very much loved in his home, perfectly honourable, upright, an enemy of all underhand dealing, and a thorough good fellow.

Wednesday, June 13th.—I think that if I had the misfortune to lose mamma, I should have a thousand reproaches against myself and feel great remorse, for I have been very rude and very violent . . . For a good cause I know, but all the same I should reproach myself for all these excesses of speech . . . Besides mamma . . . that would be an immense sorrow; even the thought of it makes me cry—however many faults I find in her.

She is virtuous, but she doesn't understand anything, and has no confidence in me. . . . She always thinks that everything will come all right, and that it is better "not to make a fuss." I think the death which would grieve me the most would, after all, be my aunt's, who has devoted her life to everybody, and who has never, even for a single minute, lived for herself, excepting the hours she spent at roulette in Baden or Monaco.

Mamma is the only one who is kind to her. I have not kissed her for a month, and I only say indifferent things to her, or reproach her about a lot of trifles. It is not out of spite, but because I, too, am very unhappy, and because all these discussions with mamma and my aunt have given me the habit of a short, hard, and crushing tone. If I were to try to say tender things, or even to speak gently, I should begin to cry like an idiot. But still, without being tender, I might be more amiable—I might smile and chat sometimes. It would make her so happy, and it would cost me nothing. But it would be such

a change in my manners, that I dare not, because of a sort of false shame.

And yet this poor woman, whose life may be written in one word—"devotion"—moves me to tenderness, and I wish I could be kind. . . If she should happen to die, what remorse I should feel!

For instance, grandpapa tried my patience sometimes by his old man's crazes, but one ought to respect age. I have happened to answer him improperly, and when he became paralysed I felt so much remorse, that I often went to him to obliterate, attenuate, and expiate.

And, besides, grandpapa was very fond of me, and I am crying as I think of him.

Friday, June 15th.—The Canroberts write me a charming letter, and everyone shows great sympathy.

This morning, hoping to meet nobody, I risk going to the Salle Petit, an exhibition of a hundred masterpieces, in aid of something or other—Decamps, Delacroix, Fortuny, Rembrandt, Rousseau, Millet, and Meissonier, the only living one among them, and others. First, I make my excuses to Meissonier, whom I did not know well, and who had only inferior things at the last exhibition of portraits. Yes, they are marvels—literally. But what induced me to go out in my crape veil was the wish to see Millet, whom I did not know at all, and whose name had been dinned into my ears. Bastien is but a poor follower of his, people said. In fact, I was driven to go. I have seen them, and I will go again to see them. . . . Bastien imitates him, if you like, because he paints peasants, and because both are great artists, and all real masterpieces have a family likeness.

Cazin's landscapes are much more like Millet than Bastien's. What I admire in Millet—in the six pictures I see here—is the impression as a whole—the harmony, the

atmosphere, the liquidness; they are little figures seen in an abstract way—very broad and very correct. And that which gives Bastien his unequalled power to-day is the scrupulous, powerful, living, and extraordinary execution of his human faces—his perfect imitation of nature — *life* in fact. His *Soir au Village,* which is but small in size, certainly equals Millet. It only contains two little faces, lost in the twilight, but the remembrance of his *Amour au Village* makes my eyes ache. What a mistake is this background! How is it that he does not see it? Yes, in those large pictures he lacks what makes Millet extraordinary in small pictures. . . . Atmosphere, harmony! . . . . Whatever may be said, the figure must predominate. *Le Père Jacques* is superior to *L'Amour au Village* in its effect — *Les Foins* also. *Le Père Jacques* was full of poetry. The little girl picking flowers is a ravishing figure, and the old man was excellent. . . . I know very well that it is difficult to give to a large picture that harmony, that firm yet mellow blending of tones, which characterises Millet. But it ought to be done. In a small picture many things can be disregarded. I speak of small pictures in which the expression predominates (and not of the minute Meissonier), like Cazin, for instance, who is the son of Millet. With a few happy strokes of the brush one can often give that indefinable something pervading the whole, not found precisely at any one point, and which we call charm . . . . while in a large picture all this is quite different . . . . and becomes much more difficult, for feeling should then be based on science, as frequently happens in the case of love and money.

Saturday, June 16th.—So then I withdraw from Bastien's pictures the qualification of "masterpieces." Why? Because his *Amour au Village* makes my hair stand on end; or

because I have not the courage of my opinion? It is the dead only of whom we dare to make gods; if Millet were alive, what would be said of him? Besides, you see only six pictures of Millet here; shall we not find in the Rue Legendre six pictures as good as these? 1, *Pas mèche;* 2, *Jeanne d'Arc;* 3, *His brother's portrait;* 4, *Le soir au village;* 5, *Les foins;* I do not know all, and he is not yet dead. Bastien is less the son of Millet than is Cazin, who resembles him very much in . . . . a younger style. . . . Bastien is original and is himself. One always begins by slightly imitating somebody, but personality is developed afterwards. Besides, poetry, power, and charm are always the same, and if to seek these is imitation, it is indeed disheartening. You feel an intense impression before a Millet, you also feel it before a Bastien. . . . What does this prove? Superficial people say *imitation*, they are wrong; two different actors can move you in the same manner, because real, human, and intense feelings are always the same.

There are about ten very graceful lines by *Etincelle* about myself. I am a remarkable painter, a beautiful young girl, and a pupil of Bastien-Lepage. What do you think of that? I saw the bust of Ernest Renan at Saint Marceaux's studio, and yesterday I saw Renan passing in a carriage; I recognised him at once.

There is a likeness, at all events!

Monday, June 18th. — Attend! this is a little event. I have promised to see the correspondent of the *Nouveau Temps* (of Saint Petersburg) this morning at eleven o'clock; he had asked for this by letter. It is a very important paper, and this M. B., amongst other things, writes articles on our Paris painters for it, and as "you occupy a prominent position amongst these, I hope you will permit me, &c."

Ah! ah! before going down I let him wait for a few minutes with my aunt, who prepares him for my appearance

by speaking of my youth, and of all sorts of things to show me off. He looks at all the pictures, and takes notes. When did I commence? where? at what age, and in what way? and details, and &c.? . . .

I am an artist of whom the correspondent of a great newspaper is about to make a study.

It is a beginning, and it is the honourable mention which has done this for me, and . . . . provided the article be good; I don't quite know whether the notes were taken correctly, for I could not hear all, and that is very aggravating.

My aunt and Dina told everything. . . . What? I am awaiting this article in agony . . . and I shall have to wait a fortnight.

They laid particular stress on my youth.

Thursday, June 21st.—To-morrow is the distribution of rewards; they sent me the list of those who are to receive them . . . and my name in it (section of paintings) is very effective . . . . but I hesitate to go; it is not worth the trouble, and then if . . . .

How do I know? fears of I don't know what.

Friday, June 22nd.—Bojidar is there by nine o'clock. He is a very curious being. The principal trait of this fantastic and careless Slav character is the love of improvisation; and when he is friendly with people, all this imagination is used to glorify his friends; he is passionately attached to people for a certain time.

Those poor artists! there were some who looked very much moved, men of forty-five years, quite pale and nervous, with overcoats or ill-made coats, going up to take their medals and to press the hand of Jules Ferry, the Minister.

A worthy sculptor having carried off his little box, opened it as soon as he got to his place, and a happy involuntary smile, like the smile of a child, came over his face. I was

rather moved myself as I looked at the others, and for a moment it seemed to me a fearful thing to have to get up and go to that table.

My aunt and Dina were sitting behind me on a bench, for the persons receiving rewards have the right to chairs . . .

Well, now this prize day is over! I hadn't imagined it like that. Oh! and to have a medal next year . . . and for everything to happen as in a dream! . . . To be applauded, to triumph!

That would be too beautiful and impossible, if I were not so unlucky. . . And if you had a second medal, you would want the grand medal? No doubt of it. And the cross? Why not? And what next? and afterwards to enjoy the fruits of one's work and trouble, to work on, and keep as much as possible at the same height and try to be happy, to love somebody.

Yes, we will see afterwards, there is no hurry. He will be neither uglier nor older in five years time than he is to-day. And if I were to marry like that at once I might regret it . . . But I must get married; I am two-and-twenty years of age. And I look older; not that I look old, but when I was thirteen, at Nice, I was taken for seventeen, and I looked it.

After all . . . to marry some one who will *truly love me;* without that I should be the most wretched of women. But further, this somebody must at least please me! To be celebrated, very celebrated, illustrious! That will settle everything . . . No . . . I must not reckon on meeting an ideal being, who would respect and love me and be a good match.

Celebrated women frighten ordinary people, and geniuses are rare.

Sunday, June 24th.—I think of the nonsense I used to write about Pietro: as when I said that I thought of him every

evening, that I expected him, that if he had unawares arrived from Nice, I should throw myself into his arms. And it was thought that I was in love with him; those who read this will think so.

But never—never was this the case—no, never!

But when you feel bored at night in summer, you often think that you would like to have occasion to throw yourself into the arms of a man who loves you . . . . It has happened a hundred times to me in imagination. But then I had a name to write, a real being whom I might call Pietro. A fig for Pietro! Well, there was the fancy of being the niece of the grand Cardinal, who might become Pope . . . . but . . . . No, I have never been in love and I never shall be now; a man would have to be so superior to please me now, I am so exacting. It would have to be . . . . but to be simply in love with some charming young fellow, no; that can never happen any more.

Thursday, June 28th.—I think sometimes that this interminable journal contains treasures of thought, sentiment, and originality which I have been hoarding up for years, for I write separate notes in a copy book. It is a necessity without motive like the necessity of breathing. But first of all I ought to give myself peace by marrying to get rid of this care; and then give myself up entirely to work.

Tuesday, July 12th.—My picture does not get on; I am miserable; nothing to console me!!

Here is the article in the *Nouveau Temps*, it is very good, but makes me feel rather embarrassed; it says that I am only nineteen, and I am more than that, and I look more, and people make me out to be older still. But the effect will be very great in Russia.

Thursday, July 12th.—The Canroberts to breakfast, and then we go to the exhibition in the Rue de Sèze. Oh, God!

what I desire is talent. Oh, God! it seems to me there's nothing left but that.

Dress, coquetry, nothing exists; I dress well, because even that is art, and I cannot go dressed anyhow, but in other respects this constant preoccupation makes me ugly; I bury myself, I shut myself up, and what good does it bring me?

All this is a fine thing to tell after the bursting out of genius, but so it is! I do not think Benvenuto Cellini as courageous as I am when he burnt his furniture; I am throwing in the flames something much better and much more. And what shall I have in return? He knew what it would be, and I? . . .

If I could soon get rid of this picture of the boys, I should go to the country, real country, with grand horizons, moors, but no mountains; with beautiful sunsets and grey slopes, grass and wild-flowers, roses and space, space. Oh, to paint a large picture with an infinite sky . . . . grass and wild-flowers.

Friday, July 13th.—Am I romantic in the ridiculous sense of the word? or am I really out of the common? for my feelings agree only with what is highest and purest in literature, and Balzac admits that writers adorn themselves with this as with paint. . . . Well? . . .

Well . . . . and love?

What is it? I have never felt it; for these passing fancies count for nothing. I have had preferences for people because an object is necessary to my imagination; so I must have preferred them because it was a want of my "great soul," and not because they made any impression upon me.

That is the whole difference. It is enormous.

Without transition, let us pass on to art. I don't see my way in painting. I am following Bastien-Lepage, and it is deplorable.

One always lags behind, and is never great, as long as one has not discovered a new method for oneself—a way of rendering individual impressions.

My own art does not exist.

I perceive it a little in the *Holy Women*. . . . And yet? It is different in sculpture. But in painting! . . . In the *Holy Women*, I imitate nobody, and I expect a grand effect, for I will put great sincerity into the material working out, and also all the emotion that I feel on this subject. The boys remind you of Bastien-Lepage, in spite of my having taken the subject from the streets, and that it is quite a common subject, very true, and seen every day. But this painter always causes me a sort of uneasiness.

Saturday, July 14th.—We go out for a drive to see decorations in the town; it amuses me.

And afterwards I continued yesterday's meditations.

Have you read Stendhal's *Amour?* I am reading it now.

I have never loved in my life, or else I have never ceased loving an imaginary being. . . . Which is it?

Read this book; it is more delicate than Balzac, it is more *real*, more harmonious and more poetic; and it expresses divinely what every one has felt; even I. But I have always been too analytic. I was never really in love, excepting at Nice when I was a child, and then it was from ignorance.

And then a sickly fancy for that horror of a Pietro.

I remember, in the evening at Naples, being all alone on the balcony listening to a serenade—really delicious moments—feeling myself in transports and ecstasies without an object, caused solely by the country, the evening, and the music.

I have never felt these impressions in Paris, nor anywhere out in Italy.

If I did not fear what people would say, I should marry X—— at once; I should be free and calm while waiting to

meet the supreme one. But, on the other hand, to marry a man who is like everybody else, and who having nothing to reproach himself with, would make me unhappy, or bore me!

Monday, July 16th.—I am much interested in crystallisation, and I am convinced that a book might be written on simple crystallisations which come to nothing. Myself, for instance, with whom *complete* love would be possible only in marriage, or any other high-principled young girl, or even married woman, we are not exempt for all that from the shocks which determine crystallisations, although these crystallisations come to nothing; and here permit me to say that I do not like the word crystallisation; but, as Stendhal says, it avoids a long explanatory phrase, so I make use of it. The crystallisation commences. If the "object" has every perfection, we allow ourselves to go towards him, and we attain love—that is to say, we love; the essential part is to love, and not to practise what Alexandre Dumas *fils* calls "love." If the *object* has not every perfection, if we find a fault or faults in him, be it something ugly or ridiculous, a lack of intellect, the affair stops half way. I also think that one can stop one's self at will.

Tuesday, July 17th.—Still thinking of the crystallisations without object, alas!

And of sculpture? Painting progresses a little better.

Oh! to have talent! to obliterate that wretched "Honourable mention!" Exhibit the boys, the holy women in a black frame, and at the foot the inscription—"And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre and departed; and there was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre." And a statue, Nausicaa or Ariadne; the sketches are all done, the Ariadne will be laughed at. They will say that it is I, forsaken by whom? And Nausicaa? I like them both!

Three things—two pictures and a statue. I wish for it so intensely that I fear the most frightful calamities. Love cannot entirely absorb me; it must be an accessory, the crowning of the edifice, an amiable superfluity. Well, we shall see!

Sunday, July 22nd.—Last night I painted my chest above the right breast, where the lung is diseased. At last I have made up my mind, there will be a yellow stain for three or four months; but at least I shall not die in a consumption.

Wednesday, July 25th.—M. X—— brings us the two busts bought for a hundred francs each. We keep him to dinner. He looks very uncomfortable, though he affects a certain self-possession. I felt for him, thinking he must be very embarrassed. They say he is poor; all this hurts me, and I am ashamed at having only given the price of a hat for two works of art. Instead of making me more kind, these feelings made me seem less cordial, and I am vexed about it. The poor fellow took off his coat in the drawing-room, and put it on a divan. He does not talk. We had some music; it made a slight diversion. He didn't seem to know exactly how to behave. I do not see much cleverness in him. However, with his talent he must be intelligent. But we could not make him feel at home; besides, he is of a wild nature. He must be very proud and very unhappy. In any case it is quite certain that he is poor, and that I bought two busts of him for two hundred francs; and it makes me feel ashamed. I should like to send him another hundred francs—for I have a capital of one hundred and fifty francs—but I don't know how.

Thursday, July 26th.—The unsettled weather keeps back my picture, and I destroy all my attempts in clay, excepting one, which is not yet placed; and just then, of course,

Saint Marceaux arrives. . . . Mind the heart beatings, crystallisation, etc. I put on and take off two gowns, I make him wait a long time, and receive him at last, flushed and clumsily dressed.

He is very amusing, always indignant with the modern school, the naturalists and the human documents. Something must be sought which is art, and which cannot be explained . . . I understand very well, but . . . He has only seen this poor specimen, and told me to go on in the same way: that is all. It is disconcerting; as the recumbent figure that C. advised me to have rough-hewn and to keep, is with the rough-hewer, he could not see it. I received no compliment excepting for that everlasting portrait of Dina, which is considered so good. . . Saint Marceaux is charming, original, clever, nervous, almost abrupt; he does not hesitate to attack everything; that is better than the hypocrisy which credits everybody with talent. He has seen my street boys, and says that it is easy to paint pictures of low life, peasants, street arabs—caricatures, in short; but rather do beautiful and fine things *with character in them*, that is the difficulty; and put into your work the something which cannot be explained—in fact, art, which we find only in ourselves. Have I not said this? Down with vile copyists, photographers and naturalists!

That is right, go on!

But what left me a painful impression was that I looked neither beautiful, nor lively, nor bright! . . .

Friday, August 3rd.—Bastien-Lepage is disheartening. When one studies Nature closely, when one wants to imitate it perfectly, it is impossible not to think all the time of this tremendous artist. He possesses every secret of the texture of the skin; what others do is only painting; but his work is Nature itself. They talk of realists, but realists do not know what reality is; they are coarse and think they are true.

Realism does not consist in reproducing a vulgar thing, but in the rendering, which ought to be perfect.

I do not want to do things which look like painting, I want it to look like flesh and blood, and to look like life! When you have taken an infinity of trouble all day, all you have gained is to reproach yourself cruelly for having worked badly, and for having produced a thing that looks dry and painted. And the remembrance of that monster of Damvillers crushes one. His work is broad, simple, and true, and all the details of Nature are there! Ah! misery.

Sunday, August 5th.—They say I have had a love affair with C., and that this is the reason I do not marry, for people cannot understand why, having a good dowry, I am not as yet a countess or a marchioness.

The idiots! Fortunately you, handful of beings of the *élite*, superior people, you dear beloved confidants who read me, you know what to think. But when you read me, all those of whom I speak will probably be dead, and C—— will carry to the grave the sweet conviction of having been loved by a young and beautiful stranger who, being in love with this cavalier, &c. The idiot! The others will believe it too, the idiots! But you know that it was not so. It might perhaps be poetical to refuse petty marquises through love; but alas! I refuse them through reason.

Tuesday, August 7th.—I get quite red when I think that in a week's time it will be five months since I finished the Salon picture. What have I accomplished in five months? Nothing as yet. Some sculpture, it is true, but that does not count. The street boys are not finished. I am very unhappy . . . . seriously. N. N. dined here and retailed to me his catalogue of the Louvre, telling me the place of nearly every picture. He has studied this to win my favour. He thinks it possible that I may marry him.

He must think me hard up to get that into his head. Perhaps it is because I cannot hear well that he thinks I have come down in the world? After he left, I almost fainted with grief. What have I done to God that He should always strike me? What does this modern Potiphar think? If he is not convinced that I will never love anything but art, what does he think? However, a love match is not to be found! Then what is it that complains? what is it that loses patience? what is it that makes ordinary life seem miserable to me? It is a real power which is within me. It is something that my poor literature cannot express.

The idea of a picture or a statue keeps me awake whole nights; never has the thought of a handsome man done so.

I went to the Louvre this morning to see Raphael after reading Stendhal. Well, no matter how I try, I cannot like him from what I see here. I prefer the naïvety of the earlier painters.

Raphael is sophisticated and untrue.

Divine, divine! . . . is he really divine?

The character of the divine is to ravish and lift our thoughts into celestial regions.

Raphael tires me.

Who then is divine? I don't know.

Why does Stendhal say that Raphael paints souls? In which of his pictures?

This is an admiration which I should have to cultivate.

I like the naïve and admirable Pre-Raphaelite artists, to whom the precious Perugino almost belongs.

But what do I care for those big absurd things all science and precision, or even for the masses of flesh by Rubens? How they bore me! What can I make of the marriage of Cana, or Raphael's Virgins? that is not divine! the Virgin is commonplace, and that child? By-the-bye, I ought to see

again what is in Italy. The remembrance I have of them is not favourable . . . . The Madonna della Seggiola is a type of a pretty Italian chambermaid, very delicate. I see more divinity in Michael Angelo. *Raphael Sanzio.* Listen to this precious name.

I want to represent only striking things, which move you or leave you palpitating or dreaming, in fact things which enchain your heart like the simple little pictures of Cazin; the size is of little consequence, but if the same effect could be produced on a large scale . . . . It would be superb! But how many are there who understand Cazin?

Saturday, August 11th.—I am reading the histories of painting by Stendhal. This intelligent man always agrees with me. But it seems to me that he looks for too much purpose and invention. He caused me a painful surprise when he said that to paint grief you ought to get information from physiology.

How?

But if I do not *feel* the tragical expression, tell me the physiology that could make me feel it?

The muscles! Ah, good Lord!

A painter who will paint pain physiologically, and not because he has felt it and understood it—seen it (even figuratively)—will be but a cold and flat artist. It is as though you were to tell anybody to grieve according to given rules. Feel first, and reason after, *if you like.* It is impossible that the analysis should not confirm the impression. But it would be an investigation out of pure curiosity.

You are free to analyse tears in order to learn logically and scientifically what colour you are to paint them! As for myself, I prefer to see them shine, and to paint them as I see them, without even knowing why they are so—and not different.

Sunday, August 12th. — The thought that Bastien-Lepage is coming unnerves me so that I have been unable to do anything. It is really ridiculous to be so impressionable. Our pope dined with us. . . . We talked at table. Bastien-Lepage is excessively intelligent, but less brilliant than Saint Marceaux. I did not show my pictures. Nothing, nothing at all! I had nothing to say—or rather, I did not shine. And when Bastien-Lepage commenced an interesting conversation I could not answer, nor even follow his sentences, which are compact and refined, like his painting. Had it been with Julian I should have replied, for it is the sort of conversation which suits me best. He is intelligent, he understands everything, he is even learned — I feared a certain ignorance. . . .

In fact, when he said things to which I ought to have replied in such a manner as to unveil my fine qualities of mind and heart, I allowed him to talk and remained mute.

I cannot even write—it is a day like that. I am disorganised. . . . I want to be alone—quite alone, to realise the impression which is interesting and considerable. Ten minutes after he came I had mentally capitulated and accepted his influence.

I did not say anything I ought to have said. He is always a god, and thinks himself one. I strengthened him still more in this opinion. He is short, and the vulgar would call him ugly; but to me, and to persons of my sphere, that head is charming. What does he think of me? I was awkward, and laughed too much. . . . He says he is jealous of Saint Marceaux. . . . A fine triumph!

Thursday, August 16th. — "A great calamity" would, perhaps, be an exaggeration; but what occurs may be justly regarded, even by reasonable persons, as a well-directed blow. . . .

And absurd . . . like all my misfortunes. I was going to send my picture to the triennial exhibition on the 20th of August—final respite—and it is not on the 20th but the 16th, to-day, that the respite expires. I have a pricking in my nose, pains in my back, and my hands are rebellious.

One must feel thus after being beaten.

After which I go and hide myself in the closet to weep over all my miseries—the only, and by no means heroic, place in which I shall not be suspected.

If I shut myself up in my room, they would guess why, after such a blow. It is I think the first time that I hide myself to cry bitterly, with my eyes shut, and my mouth square, like a child or a savage. . . .

And afterwards? Afterwards I will stay at the studio until my eyes regain their usual appearance. I cried once in mamma's arms, and that sorrow shared with another was such a cruel humiliation for months, that I will never cry with grief before anybody again. One can cry with rage, or about the death of Gambetta before anybody; but to exhibit one's weakness, one's poorness, one's misery, one's humiliation. Never! If it relieves at the time, you always repent of it as of a confidence.

While crying, you know where, I found the expression for my Magdalen, who shall not look at the sepulchre, but at nothing at all, as I was doing just now. The eyes well opened, as when you have just been crying.

Ah, well!

God is unjust, and, if He does not exist, to whom shall I turn? He is punishing me for doubting. He does everything to make me doubt, and when I doubt He strikes me, and when I persist in believing and praying He strikes me harder to teach me patience.

Friday, August 17th.—My timidity is not believed in, it may be explained by an excess of pride.

I have a horror, a terror, and despair at asking; things must be offered to me. In a moment of foolhardiness I make up my mind to ask; it never succeeds, it is nearly always too late, or beside the mark.

I get pale and red many times before I dare to say that I intend to exhibit or to paint a picture. It seems to me that people will laugh at me, that I know nothing, and that I am pretentious and ridiculous.

When any one looks at my painting (I mean an artist, of course) I go away into the third room, so much am I afraid of a word or a look. But Robert Fleury has no idea that I am so little sure of myself. As I talk braggingly, he thinks that I think highly of myself, and give myself credit for great talent. Therefore, he has no need to encourage me; and if I told him my hesitations and my fears he would laugh; I spoke to him about it once and he took it as a joke. That is the formidable error which I give rise to. I think Bastien-Lepage knows that I am dreadfully frightened at him, and he thinks himself God Almighty.

Monday, August 20th.—I am singing; the moon shines in by the large window of the studio. It is fine. One ought to manage to be happy. Yes, if one is lucky enough to be in love. In love with whom?

Tuesday, August 21st.—No, I shall not die until I am nearly forty, like Mlle. Colignon; when I am about thirty-five I shall be very ill, and at thirty-six or thirty-seven, in the winter time, in bed, all will be over. And my will! it will be limited to asking for a statue and a painting of Saint Marceaux, and of Jules Bastien-Lepage, in a chapel at Paris, surrounded by flowers, in a conspicuous place; and on each anniversary to have masses by Verdi and Pergolesi sung there, and other music, on each anniversary in perpetuity by the most celebrated singers.

Besides which, I will found a prize for artists—male and female.

Instead of doing this, I want to live; but I have no genius, so it is better to die.

Monday, August 27th.—I gave my *Fisher with rod and Line* to the Ischia lottery; the lots are shown in the Rue de Sèze, at Petit's. My fisher is good and the water is good. I should never have thought it. Ah! the frame! Ah! the middle distance! We are very absurd. What is the good of working at art, the masses understand nothing about it? Then do you love the crowd? Yes; that is to say that I should wish for a fame which all could understand, so as to get still more admiration.

Wednesday, August 29th.—I cough all the time in spite of the heat; and this afternoon, while the model was resting, I fell half asleep on the divan, and *saw* myself stretched out with a great lighted taper beside me. It would be the solution of all these miseries.

To die! I am very much afraid of it. No, I will not! It would be horrible! I don't know how happy people get on, but I am much to be pitied, since I expect nothing more from God. When that supreme refuge is gone, there is nothing left but to die. Without God there can neither be poetry, nor tenderness, nor genius, nor love, nor ambition. Our passions plunge us into uncertainties, aspirations, desires, exaggerations of thought. We want something beyond, a God to whom we can go with our enthusiasms and our prayers, a God from whom we can ask everything, and to whom we can tell everything. I should like all remarkable men to confess and say if when they were very much in love, very ambitious, or very unhappy, they did not have recourse to God.

Ordinary natures, even very intelligent and very learned ones, can do without; but those who have the *spark*, even if

they are as learned as all science itself, and even if they doubt *through reason,* they too believe out of passion, at least, sometimes.

I am not very learned, but all my reflections tend towards this: "The God we are taught to believe in is an invention: the God of religion or of religions, we will not talk about."

But the God of men of genius, the God of philosophers, the God of simply intelligent people like ourselves, that God is unjust if He does not hear us; or if He is wicked, I do not see what He has to do. But if He does not exist, why should there be this need of adoring Him, in every place, among every people, and at all times? Is it possible that *nothing* should respond to these aspirations, which are innate in all men, to this instinct which leads us to seek for the Supreme Being, the great Master, God?

Saturday, September 8th.—A good day's work; I have finished Louis's portrait. We went to Versailles, and in the evening, after the visit to the Marshal, Claire and myself go and stretch ourselves on the drawing-room floor, as we do every evening. We talk about art, as we do every evening; but to-night especially there is more real intimacy, and above all I am thinking about my picture. It is to be . . . . something full of poetry . . . . quiet, calm, simple, and profound.

I do not fall short for want of fine terms. However we shall see.

My new picture would be great . . . . calm, simple.

Thursday, September 13th.—I have been reading in Stendhal that our griefs appear less bitter when we idealise them. Most true. How shall I idealise mine? Impossible! They are so bitter, so prosaic, so dreadful, that I cannot speak of them even here without great pain. How confess that I hear badly at times? "Well! God's will be done!" The phrase

comes to me mechanically, and I almost believe it. For I shall die quite naturally, without a struggle, while nursing myself.

Well, I don't mind, for I am troubled about my sight, and have passed a fortnight without working or reading, and yet it is no better. I have a sense of vibrations and floating specks in the air. It may be due to my having bronchitis during the last fortnight, which would lay up anybody else, but in spite of which I go out as if nothing were the matter.

I have worked at Dina's portrait in such a tragic frame of mind that it will turn my hair grey.

Saturday, September 15th.—This morning I went to see the Bastiens at the Salon. How shall I put it? It's the quintessence of beauty. There are three portraits, which, in Julian's opinion, who dines with us this evening, are enough to drive one crazy. Yes, crazy! Nothing like them has ever been done. It's life itself; it's the soul. And the workmanship is incomparable, it's nature herself. You must be mad to think of painting after that.

He has a little picture called *Ripe Corn*—a man, seen from behind, is reaping. A good picture.

There are two life-size pictures: *Haymaking* and *Potato Gatherers*.

What colour! What drawing! What brush power! There is a richness of tone only found in nature herself; and the people are alive!

The simple way in which the tones blend with one another is divine, and the eye follows their gradation with genuine ecstasy.

I entered the room, not knowing it was there, and came to a sudden halt before *Haymaking*, as you would stop before a window unexpectedly opening on a landscape.

He does not receive justice. He is miles and miles above everybody. Nothing can compare with him.

I am thoroughly ill. I put an enormous blister on my chest. After that, doubt, if you can, my courage and my wish to live. No one knows it, in fact, except Rosalie; I walk about the studio reading, talking, and singing in a voice that is almost beautiful. As I often do nothing on a Sunday, no one is surprised.

Tuesday, September 18th.—It seems that the Russian press in noticing me has made every one notice me a little, the Grand-Duchess Catherine among others. Mamma is acquainted with her chamberlain and his family, and there has been some serious talk of my appointment to the post of lady-in-waiting.

But it is necessary to be presented to the Grand-Duchess. Indeed, it has all been discussed; but mamma was wrong in leaving matters to take care of themselves, and coming back here.

And then . . . . my beautiful soul needs a sister soul. I shall never have a friend. Claire says I can't have a girl friend because I have no little secrets and little girlish adventures.

"You are too irreproachable, you have nothing to hide."

Wednesday, September 26th.—Now that the vexations have been forgotten, I only remember what was good, original, and clever about my father. He was a man of impulse, and seemed frivolous and eccentric to the vulgar. He had a certain amount of hardness and cunning may be . . . . but who is without faults, and I myself? . . . . Indeed, I blame myself, and weep for him.

Had I only gone that time. . . . It would have been for the sake of appearances, as I had no feeling about the matter. . . .

Would it have been meritorious *all the same?* I don't think so.

I didn't have that feeling, and God will punish me for it. And will my emotion of this evening be taken into account?

Are we responsible for our *genuine* feelings, whether good or bad?

"We must do our duty," you say. There was no question of duty. I am speaking of feeling, and since I did not then feel the necessity of going, how will God judge me?

Yes, I regret not to have felt sooner the emotion of this evening. And he is dead, and it is irreparable. And what would it have cost me to do my duty, *for it was my duty,* to go to my dying father? I did not see it, and I feel that I am not altogether blameless. I did not do my duty, and I ought to have done it. It will be an eternal regret. Yes, I did not act well, and I repent, I am humiliated in my own eyes, and it is very painful. I won't make excuses, but don't you think mamma ought to have told me so? Ah! well, yes! She was afraid of tiring me, and then they said, "If Marie goes with her mother, they will stop six months out there! but if Marie remains here, her mother will come back all the sooner."

The family reasoned in this way. Alas! without knowing it we are always under somebody's influence.

Monday, October 1st.—The remains of our great writer, Tourgeniff, who died a fortnight ago, has been sent to Russia to-day. At parting there was a grand ceremony at the station. Speeches were made by M. Renan, M. About, and Vyrouboff, a Russian, who spoke very well in French, and moved his hearers more than the others. Edmond About spoke in such a low voice that I heard but little; Ernest Renan, whose face I saw, as interpreted by St. Marceaux's bust, did very well, and the last farewell vibrated in our hearts. Bogoliouboff also made a speech. In fact I am proud to see such honours paid to a Russian by these most arrogant Frenchmen.

I love, but despise them.

They left Napoleon to die at St. Helena. That was an immense, monstrous, abominable crime; a lasting shame. . . . .

It is true that the Romans assassinated Cæsar.—Then again they have spit upon Lamartine, who, as the younger Dumas justly remarks, would have had altars raised to him by the ancients.

And to mention a more personal grievance, they misunderstand the talent of Bastien-Lepage.—We went to the Salon after Tourgeniff, and I can't see these paintings without bursts of enthusiasm, inward outbursts, or it might be thought I was in love with him.

Meissonier! But Meïssonier is only a juggler who produces such microscopic work as to fill us with astonishment bordering on emotion . . . . But as soon as he abandons this minute style, as soon as his heads have more than a centimetre, it grows hard and commonplace; but no one dare say so, and everybody admires him, although *all* his canvases at this year's Salon are only good and well drawn.

Is that art?

People in full costume who play on the piano, or ride on horseback, &c.. . . .

Well, a great many *genre painters* do as much. The works of his which struck me as astonishingly beautiful are first the *Players at Bowls* in the Antibes Road. It's a scene from the life, although in the dress of the ancients, full of air and sunlight, yet so small, and done in a way to strike you dumb with surprise.

Then he himself and his father on horseback, on the same road, I believe; then the *Etcher.* The movement; and expression are rendered with great truth. This man who thinks, works, and is perhaps absorbed in his subject, interests and touches us, while the details are simply miraculous. Besides these, there is a Louis XIII. cavalier looking out of window, same size, equally true in movement, the action being human, natural and simple—a particle of life, in short.

As to the others I class them with good *genre* pictures, carefully executed, and which would add nothing, perhaps, to Meissonier's fame without the above-mentioned masterpieces. As to his portraits, when the heads are only two centimetres long they look like cardboard; they get worse the bigger they are.

I bow and pass on, he will never touch me.

But look at the portraits of Bastien-Lepage! The majority would make an outcry if I were to say that they are very greatly superior to Meissonier's. And yet there's no doubt of it.

But envious people make use of a reputation of long standing as if it were a club for knocking down newcomers of whom they are afraid.

There's nothing comparable to the portraits of Bastien-Lepage. Discuss his pictures . . . . well and good, you may not be able to understand them;—but his portraits! From the beginning of the world until to-day nothing better has been done.

Saturday, October 6th.—The dear, good, excellent Robert Fleury comes to see my picture. Dear, good, excellent! You will guess from this that he didn't pull me to pieces. His first words were: "It makes a very good impression."

I interrupted him at once.

"No, Monsieur, I don't want you to spare me. That horrible Julian says that people make allowances for me, that I know nothing, that . . . . ."

"Pardon me, Mademoiselle, I have always treated you as a student who is thoroughly in earnest, one who works in the most serious manner."

"M. Julian says I know nothing . . . . that—"

"And you take his teasing seriously?"

And the charming man laughed heartily at my *naïveté*. . . . .

Well, this is what he said of the pictures:—It's very good; there are some parts which are extremely good (I quote his own words), some parts which I should probably never surpass. The boy to the right and the one in the foreground with his back turned are as good as possible. But the background on the right-hand side wants more light, and this, it seems, would add enormously to the general effect of my figures which I am not to touch again, except for two eyes which I must make less black.

It's about two hours' work.

I ought to be mad with joy, but I am not, because I don't share the opinion of my excellent master. I can do better . . . . Is what I have done not good? not good enough . . . . I see things better than that, I ought to paint as I see them.

What will the public say? Will it be noticed? How can *one* tell? He thinks it good. Don't send it to Nice; keep it for Paris. He says that it's good; but *good* is a matter of comparison, and I don't care for what is merely comparatively good. It may be good for another, but is it good for me, will the world think it so? Is it strong? He considers that the little fellow's back is perfect in drawing; he says that his little legs may be felt behind his trousers, that he stands firmly on his feet and all . . . .

He may fancy that I was thinking of anatomical difficulties.

I *copied* nature without thinking of anything; it seems to me for that matter that talent acts unconsciously.

Saturday, October 6th.—I have read a novel of our famous Tourgeniff, all at one sitting and in French, in order to realise the impression he produces on foreigners.

He was a great writer, very subtle and delicate in his analysis of character; a poet, a Bastien-Lepage. His landscapes are as beautiful, and he describes shades of sentiment as happily as Bastien-Lepage paints them.

What a sublime artist!

Millet! Well, he is as poetic as Millet; I use this platitude for the fools who would not understand me otherwise.

All that's grand, poetic, beautiful, subtle, true in music, in literature, in everything . . . . brings me back to this marvellous painter, to this poet. He takes what men of the world would consider vulgar subjects, and extracts the most penetrating poetry from them.

What can be more commonplace than a little girl who takes care of a cow, or a woman working in a field?

And how has it been done?

Nobody has done it like him. He is quite right, he condenses about three hundred pages in a canvas. But there are perhaps fifteen of us who understand him.

Tourgeniff has also painted peasants, the poor Russian peasant; and with how much truth, naïveté, sincerity! It is truly touching, poetic, and great.

Unfortunately this part of his work cannot be understood abroad, where he is chiefly known by his studies of society.

Tuesday, October 9th.—Bojidar's portrait appears to me—good; Julian says that it may be a great success; that it's very original, very new, that it will appear like a skilful Manet.

For my part I consider it amusing. He leans on a balcony, the body fronting the spectator, the head in profile against the sky; you see the dockyard, the houses, the roofs, a street, a cab; it is an exact likeness on the whole, but something seems wanting in the mask. The head and body are very life-like, even to my mind.

There are nasturtiums on the balcony. He is crumpling one between his fingers while looking at the street; but I

shall replace the flower by a cigarette; the other hand is in his pocket. It's a half-length life-size. The hand is still to do.

But at half-past five I discover a slightly red sky with the crescent in it, which is just exactly the *effect* I wanted for my *Holy Women*. I instantly made a rough sketch of it. I can only do this picture by a lucky stroke; such a sky can't be made to order; I am much inclined to begin at once, *now*. I could do it in three weeks. In any case let us try . . . . The weather won't be worse at Concarneau in November than in October, and then . . . . we should do what attracts us at the propitious moment, the psychological moment.

I've got my sky and I shall go to the south for the landscape and the plants. I have got my model here. Let me see now, when should I go south? When I have drawn in the figures and the sky—in a fortnight; and when I am once there, I shall perhaps find some pictures to paint, for I don't feel sure of my *Holy Women*. I may succeed, or I may be seven years over them.

Then the sky. . . . If it were but on a small scale. . . . But no, I want it life-size, it will be more striking.

Wait a while still? Perhaps; for I did well to wait so far. Only a few months ago I should have spoiled the execution; I wanted to paint it piecemeal and did not sufficiently understand the tone it required. I should also like to be better known first, and only to exhibit this picture when my name is made, as it might otherwise run the risk of being overlooked. Whom shall I consult? Who will see the truth, and tell it?

It must be you again, my only friend, you will at least be frank, and you love me. Yes, I love myself, and I only.

First, I must *finish* the gamins, and have another picture to send with it. Exhibit Bojidar in one of the winter exhibitions at the club, along with a portrait of Dina.

And do a statue. This is my dream. It is possible.

Monday, October 15th.—We go to the Salon—the Gavinis, mamma, and I. To-day, at last, M. Gavini agrees with me that Bastien-Lepage's portraits are superior to Meissonier's.

I had to argue six months, but am very much pleased.

What can the opinion of a man of the world matter to me? It's a little personal triumph; it pleases us to convince others of our opinions; with the apostles it became a passion, and there are some still among us; and then in youth we are full of fire, and wish to make others share in our enthusiasm; the day will come when I won't care; there are things already that I don't care for any more.

And Bastien-Lepage will gain the good opinion of men of the world, who entertain a certain contempt for him at present. As for me, I should like to be useful and agreeable to all the world; to play the part of providence, and save, and make people happy. And even, what will surprise you most, without particularly wishing that they should know I had done it. Oh! I am an angel!

Monday, October 22nd.—I wish my phthisis were only a fancy.

It seems there was a time when it was the fashion to be consumptive, and when everybody tried to appear, or believed himself, to be so. Ah! were it only possible that I imagined it! But, all the same, and in spite of it all, I want to live. I don't suffer from unhappy love, or any sentimental mania, or anything else. I want to be famous, and to enjoy what's good in the world . . . . it is so simple.

Sunday, October 28th.—It enrages me to think I have nothing on the stocks; I say to myself, let us go to Fontainebleau, and then again, Why? I could find some wooded spot close by to which I could drive in a cab every morning; or why not paint the mists on the Seine? Or else . . . . but I don't see my way clearly, and don't know what I want.

Or why not go to Arcachon, which is like the East, and where I could begin the *Holy Women?* and, at the same time, make as many studies as elsewhere. Then what of my sculpture? If I travel, my statue will not be done.

To get rid of these vacillations, I will paint the mist on the Seine in a boat. It will do me good.

I get up at one o'clock in the morning to say that I have at last a wish to paint something. I suffered because I seemed to have no wish for anything.

It's like a flame rising, rising; it's like a sudden glimpse of him one loves; a glow of emotion and of joy.

It makes me blush by myself.

I long to paint the forest with the flaming leaves—the marvellous tones of October, with just one or two figures in it. In the *Père Jacques*, by Bastien-Lepage, the wood, if I remember right, was already too far gone; it was bare and a little grey. I should like to make it red, green, golden. . . .

And yet this also will not be *the* picture. Only in the *Holy Women* shall I be able to show myself. . . . I dare not begin them, I really dare not.

Come to bed.

Thursday, November 1st.—I go to paint at the Grande Jatte—an avenue of trees with golden tones. A medium size canvas.

Luckily Bojidar came with me, for I had not remembered it was a *fête*, and when we got there we found a number of bargees, and Rosalie would perhaps have proved an insufficient chaperon. Moreover, in order to come and go and paint in this aristocratic island, I dress like an old German woman. Two or three woollen petticoats to disguise my figure, a wrap which cost twenty-seven francs, a black knitted shawl round the head, and socks on my feet.

Friday, November 2nd.—What I am doing is very

beautiful. . . . To-day there wasn't so much as a cat about. It's a desert on week days, especially at this season. Ah! well, if only I don't get ill!

I have such a wish to paint a picture! . . . . After that I won't paint out of doors again this winter. It might be done in a month on the water during November. It's very simple and beautiful. I shall wrap myself well up—all but the eyes.

Monday, November 5th.—The leaves have fallen, and I don't know how to finish my picture. I have no luck. Luck! How awful a thing it is — an inexplicable and terrible power.

As to this picture in the boat, I've got the canvas, but don't know whether to do it now. . . .

Ah, yes! but quickly, very quickly, in a fortnight, and then to show it to Julian and Robert Fleury, quite taken by surprise.

If I could do so I should revive. I suffer from not having done more this summer. It is a dreadful regret. I should like to define this particular state more clearly. I feel debilitated—it's like a great calm. I suppose people who have just been bled feel something like it.

I will make up my mind to bear it until May. . . . But why should it change with the month of May? How can one know?

This makes me reflect on all that there may be in me of good and remarkable, and I feel soothed and comforted.

This feeling made me talk to my family at dinner—talk amiably and naturally—with the same air of sweetness and calm which I had on that day when I first turned my hair up from the forehead.

Well, I feel a great calm — I will work calmly. I fancy all my movements will be quiet now—that I shall consider the universe with gentle condescension.

I am as calm as if I were strong, or because I am strong. And patient as if I were certain of the future. . . . Who knows? I really feel myself invested with a certain dignity. I have confidence. I am a power. And then . . . . what next? Yet it is not love? No. But outside it there's nothing of interest. . . . That's as it should be. Mademoiselle, do think of your art.

Thursday, November 8th.—I read in a paper that at the opening of an industrial exhibition—Rue de Sèze—yesterday, there was quite a fashionable crowd—our grand-dukes among others. I ought to have gone, but allowed the day to pass.

No, I'll struggle no more. I have no luck. And this sets me singing to the accompaniment of my harp. Had I been thoroughly happy, perhaps I could not work. They say that all great artists have always had a thorn in their flesh. The thorn in my flesh are the petty annoyances which always take me back to art—my sole reason for living.

Oh, to become famous!

When I imagine myself famous it acts like lightning—like the contact with an electric battery. I leap from my chair, and begin walking up and down the room.

You will say that if I had been married at seventeen I should be like everybody else. A great mistake. *To make me marry like other people I must have been different from what I am.*

Do you think I have ever been in love? I don't think so. Those passing infatuations look like love, but it can't be the real thing.

I still continue feeling very weak . . . . as if the chords of an instrument were unstrung. And why? Julian says that I look like an autumnal landscape, like a

forsaken avenue filled with the mist and desolation of winter. . . .

"Exactly what I am, dear sir."

He hits the truth sometimes—papa Julian.

"Are you going to show your picture to the great man?"

"I would sooner jump from a fifth floor."

"Well, that shows that you consider it unsatisfactory, and that you can do better."

"Very true."

Saturday, November 10th.—I should like to put down to moral causes a slight feverish attack, brought on by yesterday's wind on the Seine.

I work at home; sculpture.

My poor child, *everything* drives you to art; don't mistake all these indications, go.

Only fame can give what you want, and they say you can win it.

Sunday, November 11th.—I dined this evening at Jouy; I think I really love those people. They are intelligent and amiable. I have pleasure in seeing them, they are not such a boring set as the others.

Sudden change of decoration; everything looks smiling, calm, and beautiful. I know what I want to do, and all goes well.

Monday, November 12th.—Drumont, of *La Liberté*, comes to see us.

He hates my style of thing, but pays me great compliments, asking me at the same time, in amazement, how it happens that, living in the midst of elegance and refinement, I can love what is ugly. He considers my *gamins* ugly.

"Why didn't you choose some that were pretty, it would be just as well?

I chose *expressive* faces, if I can use such a word. For that matter you don't see such wondrous beauty among the boys in the street; to find that you must go to the Champs Élysées and paint the poor little be-ribboned babies attended by their nurses.

Where then shall I find any movement, any of that savage and primitive liberty, any true expression? Well-brought-up children already put on certain airs.

And then . . . . I know I am right.

Saturday, November 17th.—The country gives you a lively sense of the beauty of pictures.

The Parisians cannot worship it, but if they would only take the trouble to look at the country with its grandeur, simplicity, beauty, and poetry; where every blade of grass—where the trees, the earth, the looks of passing women, the attitude of children, the gait of old men, the colour of their dress—everything in short—harmonises with the landscape! . .

Thursday, November 22nd.—*L'Illustration Universelle* (of Russia) publishes an illustration of my picture—*Jean et Jacques*—on its first page.

It is the first illustrated paper in Russia, and I seem quite at home.

Yet it gives me no delight. Why? It is pleasant, but does not fill me with delight.

Why? Because it isn't enough for my ambition. If two years ago I had had an honourable mention, I should have fainted. If last year they had given me a medal, I should have wept upon Julian's waistcoat. . . . . But now . . . .

Events are logical, alas! Everything has a sequence, follows in due course, and is prepared little by little. A third medal next year will seem natural. If I get nothing, I shall rebel.

We only experience a very vivid joy when the event is unexpected, and to some extent takes us by surprise.

A second medal at the next Salon would make me happy because I don't expect it. And then it is not so much the medal which counts, as the greater or less success accompanying it.

Friday, November 23rd—Saturday, November 24th.—Something very surprising has happened, and which gives me the greatest pleasure. My *Pêcheur à la Ligne,* which I had given to the Ischia raffle, is at the Hôtel Drouot, among a collection of pictures; the husband of one of the chambermaids came to tell us in amazement that a picture signed Bashkirtseff was at the sale, and would be sold this evening. Mamma and Dina went, and were present when it went for one hundred and thirty francs. You will not think much of one hundred and thirty francs, but I do. It had no frame, only a mount worth twenty francs, so that my painting sold for one hundred and ten francs at the Hôtel Drouot. The ladies try to make me believe that it is two hundred and thirty, but I saw quite plainly that the two was a one on the catalogue. Dina told the princess and others four hundred and thirty francs. O truth! Well, the one hundred and thirty are true. Dina says that she thought everybody was looking at her, and mamma turned her head away in terror. Really, I can't quite believe it yet, it seems so delightful.

Wednesday, November 28th.—I painted a portrait of Dina, a harmony in white, splendid. The young lady, in turning over my albums yesterday, made me find an old design—the murder of Cæsar. It fired my imagination. I made notes of a few tones at four o'clock in the open air; for during the last three days we have had the aurora borealis setting Paris aflame. . . . It was done in a cab; I painted, and the cab drove on. I was only looking out for tones. This done, I come in and seize upon Suetonius and Plutarch. Montesquieu adores the narrative of the murder in Plutarch. What an

Academician! How finely composed, how eloquent it is! Whereas Suetonius makes you shudder; it is an official report which curdles your blood. With what mysterious power are great men invested that after several centuries their lives and deaths make us shudder and weep? I have wept for Gambetta. Every time I read their history I weep for Napoleon, Alexander, and Cæsar. But Alexander died badly, whereas Cæsar . . . .

I shall paint this picture *for myself*—firstly, for the sake of the sentiment, and the crowd who are Romans; next because there's anatomy and blood in it, and I am a woman, and women have done nothing classical on a large scale hitherto; and finally I want to use my gifts of composition and drawing . . . . and because it will be very fine.

What bothers me is that it passes in the Senate instead of in the open air; it's a difficulty the less . . . . and I should like them all . . . . When I feel that I am attempting the most difficult things I suddenly grow very cold, very determined; I brace up my energies and concentrate myself, and do much better than in works which are within reach of my inferiors. There's no need to go to Rome to paint this picture, and I shall begin it as soon as . . . . and yet in March and April spring gives such lovely tints to the outside world. I intended painting the blossoming trees at Argenteuil . . . . There's so much to do in life, and life is so short! I don't even know whether I shall have time to carry out what is already conceived . . . .

The *Holy Women* . . . . The great bas-relief! *Spring! Julius Cæsar—Ariadne.* It makes me giddy. I should like to do them all—all at once . . . . And they will have to be done slowly . . . . in due order, with many delays and revulsions and disenchantments . . . . Life is logical, and all hangs together. And when Brutus, pursued by phantoms, kills himself, I find myself crying out: "Well done, rascal—well done, ignoble assassin!"

To succeed in what is great! don't think that I dream of next year or even of the year after . . . . but later . . . . But all the same, it is so intoxicating that I won't think of it.

Saturday, December 1st.—Am I not acting the part of dupe? Who will give me back my best years? spent . . . perhaps in vain!

But I have a good answer to these doubts of the *vulgar me*—that I really had nothing better to do; everywhere else, and living as others do, I should have had to suffer too much . . . . and then I should not have reached this moral development which gives me a kind of superiority . . . . very trying to myself. Stendhal had known at least one or two people capable of understanding him; but as for me, it's frightful; everybody is commonplace; and those whom I took for really clever, now appear stupid. Is it possible that I have become what is called *un être incompris.* I think not, and yet . . . . But it seems to me that I have good cause for surprise and annoyance when people believe me capable of things of which I am quite incapable, and which would compromise my dignity, my delicacy—nay, even my very elegance. . . .

Is there any one who could understand me thoroughly, to whom I could say everything? . . . Who could understand all, and in whose conversation I should recognise my own thoughts? . . . Ah, my dear, that would be love!

Possibly; but without going so far it would be very agreeable to find people who would judge one with intelligence and with whom conversation would be possible . . . . I don't know of any. Julian was the sole exception, and I begin to find him more and more reserved. He becomes even irritating when he begins his interminable teasing jokes which don't hit the mark, especially in matters of art: he doesn't understand that I apprehend clearly and want to reach my aim; he thinks me wrapped up in myself . . . . And yet . . . .

at intervals he is still my confidant. Complete similarity of feeling doesn't exist, apparently, unless one is in love; for love can create miracles . . . . But on the contrary, is it not this complete similarity which gives birth to love?—a sister soul.—As for me I think that this much-abused expression is very just. Ah well, who is this soul? Somebody, the tip of whose ear even I shall never see.

Not a word, not a look ought to be out of keeping with the idea which I . . . . entertain. . . . It isn't that I look for an impossible perfection, for a being with nothing human about him; what I ask is that his errors shall appear interesting to me, and not ruin him in my eyes; that he shall correspond to my dream—not, indeed, the commonplace dream of an impossible divinity; but that everything about him shall please me . . . . and that I shall not suddenly discover in him some hidden want, something stale or stupid or incomplete, or trivial, or petty, or false, or selfish; any one of these stains, however small, is enough to undo everything.

Sunday, December 2nd.—My heart, in short, is empty, quite, quite empty. . . . . But I must have dreams to amuse me. . . . And yet I have experienced nearly all those things mentioned by Stendhal as belonging to true love, which he calls the love-passion — all those thousand vagaries of the imagination, all those childish follies he speaks of. . . . That's why I have seen the most tiresome people with delight, because on some one day they came near my ideal.

For the rest, I think, that one who is always at work, and pre-occupied with hopes of fame (be it a woman or a man) does not love as those who have nothing else to do.

Balzac and Jules (not Cæsar) have said it; the sum of energy is a fixed quantity; if you spend it all to the right, you have nothing for the left, or else the effort is less being divided.

"If you send five hundred thousand men on the Rhine, they can't at the same time remain in Paris."

It seems likely therefore that, according to this theory, my tender sentiments slip over me, easily.

Monday, December 3rd.—Come now, I am intelligent and just, I give myself credit for being clever and clear-sighted . . . . in short, for every mental quality. Well, that being the case, why should I not judge myself? Surely that ought to be possible, as I am clear-sighted. Am I really somebody, or shall I be somebody in art? *What do I think of myself?* Those are terrible questions, as I think badly of myself, compared to the ideal I wish to reach; on the other hand, in comparison with others . . . .

It is difficult to judge oneself, and then . . . . from the moment it isn't genius . . . . and I have not done anything as yet to allow of a final judgment, even by myself.

And I am in despair about my work; no sooner is it finished than I should like to begin it all over again; I find everything bad, because I am always *comparing* it with what I should like it to be. . . . But it is comforting to look round; we see those who do worse, and who are admired. . . . Well, then, it's a matter of moods. At bottom, I confess, I don't think much of my artist-self. I may as well say so (in the hope of being mistaken.) To begin with, if I believed I had genius, I should never complain of anything. . . . But genius is such a formidable word that I laugh in writing it of myself, even if only to say that I lack it. . . . If I thought I had genius, I should go mad with joy.

Well, well! I don't think I have genius, but I hope the world will.

Monday, December 10th.—Modelling in the morning. In the afternoon I paint the bodice and the bouquet of the head that laughs. My model is a little good-for-nothing, half ballet-

dancer, half-model; and she laughs funnily. I've done it. Then by gaslight I did a drawing, a woman reading near an open piano! Done. If I got on like this every day, it would be charming.

But fifty unknown painters are doing what I do and don't complain of being stifled with genius, for if genius stifles you, it shows you haven't any; they who have, have the strength to bear it.

The word *genius* is like *love*, it cost me an effort to write it for the first time; but once I had done so, I have used it constantly and on all occasions; it is so with everything that at first sight appears tremendous, terrifying, and unattainable; having overcome your nervousness, you can't have enough of it, as if to make up for your first hesitation and shrinking. This clever remark doesn't seem very clear, but I must spend my fluid; I have worked till seven o'clock this evening; having some left, I will let it run off my pen.

I am getting thin, well .... May God take pity on me!

Tuesday, December 11th.—This morning, nothing! In the afternoon I sketched in the head of a little street girl of five, laughing, and in profile. I intend doing five or six heads, all laughing. It begins with one of eight months, then the little girl of this afternoon. Then Armandine (the dancer of Japhet), full face, in a hat and sealskin jacket, with a bunch of violets on one shoulder. Then I shall put a masher in a dress-coat sucking his stick, an innocent young girl next, and finally an old man and woman. All of them in one frame.

"Laughter is the distinctive faculty of man." These different kinds of laughter may have something very comic. And I shall do them very quickly, as in the case of Armandine; it would be for some minor exhibition.

Sunday, December 23rd.—True artists can't be happy; to begin with, they know that the mass can't understand them; they know that they are working for the few, that the others follow their own bad taste or the *Figaro*. The general ignorance in matters artistic, in all classes, is frightful.

Those who speak well of art do so out of respect for what they have read or heard from so-called competent judges. . . .

Well . . . . I think there are days on which one feels all those trivialities too naïvely—days on which an inappropriate conversation seems more unendurable than on others, when trifles make you suffer, when you endure actual pain on hearing platitudes exchanged during a couple of hours without a grain of gaiety or worldly polish to make them palatable.

But you may have noticed that I am not one of those chosen spirits that weep when forced to listen to the empty drawing-room chatter, the petty gossip, the customary compliments, the remarks on the weather and on the Italian opera. I am not so silly as to insist on hearing interesting conversation everywhere, and so-called commonplaces of society, which may be lively, but are usually dull, do not annoy me; it is an evil I can endure, even with pleasure, at times; but true dulness, true stupidity, the want of . . . . in short, the commonplaces of society, and lack of spirit into the bargain.

That, indeed, is dying by inches.

Saturday, December 29th.—Oh, misery! how dark, dreary, and full of despair some days are! All that scandalmongering, what will it not make people say, believe, invent. . . .

But I have never done anything immoral! And to think!

Oh my friends! lose everything but keep up appearances! These petty annoyances make me profoundly wretched.

In talking nonsense one may be right, and yet infamously in the wrong.

What bitter, despicable, petty things, which I am innocent of, cannot be set right now. Oh! wretchedness!

These are dark, dreary, desperate days. I am shamefully calumniated.

And I have done nothing, as regards myself or others. Claire and Villevielle are at work, and I weep as I write at the other end of the library.

There are days when we give out light, and others when we are like an extinguished lamp; I am extinguished.

Monday, December 31*st.*—The Maréchale and Claire dined yesterday with the Princess Mathilde, and Claire tells me that Lefebvre said to her that he knew I had genuine talent, and was a rather extraordinary person; that I went into society every evening, and (with a knowing air) was superintended, *guided* by some eminent painters.

Claire, looking him straight in the eyes: "What eminent painter, Julian—Lefebvre?"

"No; Bastien-Lepage."

Claire: "But you are entirely mistaken, Monsieur; she goes out very little, and works all the time. As to Bastien-Lepage, she sees him in her mother's drawing-room, he never goes into her studio."

She's a darling, that little girl, and she spoke the truth, for Heaven knows that devil of a Jules never helps me in anything. And yet Lefebvre seemed to believe it.

It is two o'clock; it is the new year. At the theatre, precisely at midnight, watch in hand I wished my wish in single word—a beautiful, sonorous, magnificent word, intoxicating, whether it be written or spoken—

Fame!

CHAPTER VII.

PARIS, 1884.—DEATH.

Wednesday, January 2nd.—Aunt Hélène, my father's sister, died a week ago. Paul telegraphed the news.

A second telegram to-day. Uncle Alexander has just died of an apoplectic stroke. It's harrowing. And the poor man adored his family, and he had ended by loving his wife to distraction. As he had never read Balzac, nor, perhaps, any other novelist, he was not acquainted with ready-made phrases; but I have not forgotten some things he said, and so his death grieves me. It seems some people tried to make him believe that the attentions of a neighbour were acceptable to his wife, and I remember hearing him say, "Well, supposing this infamy were true! Is not my wife, whom I married at fifteen, my flesh, my blood, my soul? Are we not *one?* If I had sinned should I not forgive myself? How is it possible I should not forgive my wife; it is just as if, in order to punish myself, I were to tear out my eyes, or cut off one of my arms!"

During my last stay in Russia he was always saying, "You don't know, my little Marie, and I can't explain myself, but you are so intelligent that you will understand me. . . . Formerly I had so many anxieties—such a desire to increase my means and to become rich, that I did not consider my wife as I ought. But now that all is settled, that I am no longer preoccupied as formerly by dry and engrossing interests; now I need only consider happiness and my wife's wishes: my poor dear Nadine's, whom I adore. Yes, everything is altered now. It would take too long to explain, but everything is altered."

He leaves three children. Étienne is sixteen, Julie fifteen, and Alexander is eight or ten months old. And his poor wife is thirty-three.

Friday, January 4th.—Yes, I am in a consumption, and it progresses.

I am ill. No one knows it. But I am feverish every evening. Everything goes wrong, and it bores me to speak of it!

Saturday, January 5th.—The opening of Manet's exhibition at the École des Beaux Arts!

I go there with mamma.

Manet has not been dead a year. I did not know much about his work. The general impression of this exhibition is striking.

It is incoherent, childish, and grandiose. Some of his works are perfectly crazy, and yet there are splendid bits. Given a little more, and he would be one of the great masters of painting. His work is generally ugly, sometimes deformed, but always living. There are some splendid impressions.

And even his worst things have a something which prevents your feeling disgust or lassitude. There is so much *aplomb* — such appalling self-confidence, joined to an ignorance no less appalling. . . . It's like the childhood of genius. And, again, copies taken bodily from Titian (the sketch of the woman and the negro), from Velasquez, Courbet, and Goya. But all these painters steal from one another. What of Molière, by the way? He has taken whole pages, word for word. I have read it, I know.

Tuesday, January 8th.—Dina sits well, but for some reason she doesn't feel the pose, and changes it without moving. I should much prefer a woman who moved a great deal, but occasionally sat just as she ought. . . . Or, perhaps . . . . but never mind the reason, I don't get on, that's all. . . .

And as I don't give way to this inability, it's a dreadful struggle, which prostrates me. My rage reaches to a pitch when I appear extraordinarily calm, and all my

movements are as slow as a sick person's, while all the time I long madly to break and tear everything.

Monday, January 14th.—I feel as if I had taken a journey to Damvillers. Emile Bastien has told us everything—the plan of the picture, the manner of life. . . . He does nothing in the dark, and has not imposed silence on us; no he has not . . . . If he has not invited us to see the studies of Concarneau, the fact is he never invites any one. He would even consider it conceited to invite people to see a few studies done anyhow at Concarneau, whither he had gone to rest. In short, he says that the friendly manner in which he had been received at our house seemed to do away with such formalities, and that he would have been enchanted if we had come, &c. That he never invites any one, even to come and see his important pictures; his brother being only told to inform a few friends. . . .

But what concerns me more nearly is that he said to his brother on being told about my picture—

"Why didn't you mention it in Paris, I would have gone to see it."

"I said nothing to him in Paris, because if he had called you would have hidden everything from him as usual. He knows nothing of what you do, only what you exhibit. You turn your canvases to the wall. Do you know he will never want to look at your paintings again if you do so?"

"He will if I like, if I ask him for advice."

"He will always be delighted to give you that."

"But I am not his pupil. Alas!" . . .

"And why not? He would like nothing better; he would feel much flattered if you consulted him; and he would give you disinterested advice—advice full of common sense in short. For he is an excellent judge, apart from all bias . . . . and he would be happy to have an interesting pupil. . . Believe me, he would be very much flattered and pleased."

Wednesday, January 16th.—The architect told me that among his brother's many ideas for pictures he has thought of the *Shepherds at Bethlehem.*

My imagination has been busy for two days, and this afternoon I have seen it clearly as in a vision. Yes, the shepherds at Bethlehem—a sublime subject, and which he will make still more sublime.

Yes, I have had such a clearly defined vision that I can only compare my impression to that of the shepherds—a sacred enthusiasm and complete adoration.

Yes, during two or three hours I was madly in love through admiration. But you won't be able to understand that.

Do you feel all the mystery, the tenderness, the grand simplicity he will put in it? It is possible to imagine if you know his works, and are able to discover the mysterious and fantastic affinities between *Jeanne d'Arc* and the *Evening in the Village*, the effect of which will be reproduced in some form in the shepherds. Don't you find it fascinating in me to get enthusiastic over pictures that I have never seen, and which don't exist as yet? Admitting that the majority will find me ridiculous, two or three dreamers will agree with me, and for that matter I can do without them.

Jeanne d'Arc was not understood in France, and in America they knelt down before it. *Jeanne d'Arc* is a masterpiece in execution and sentiment.

You should have heard Paris speaking of it. It was a shame!

Is it possible that success should attend the Phædras and Auroras? In short . . . Has the public cared for Millet, Rousseau, Corot? It cared for them when they became the fashion.

The want of sincerity of the enlightened is a disgrace to our times; they pretend to think *this style of art* is neither serious nor dignified, and they praise "those who follow the traditions of the old masters." Need I explain or dwell upon the obtuseness of these reasonings?

What is high art, I ask, if not that art which—while

painting the flesh, the hair, the clothes, the trees to perfection, as if you could touch them, so to speak—paints the soul, the spirit, the life of things, at the same time? *Jeanne d'Arc*, forsooth, is not high art, because she is depicted as a peasant girl at home, and not in armour and with white hands.

No, *L'Amour au Village* is inferior to *Jeanne d'Arc*, and the idiotic or perfidious critics would confine him to a single line by their praise, indignant that a man who has painted peasants should dare paint anything else, should paint an historical peasant like Jeanne d'Arc.

Hypocritical Pharisees!

For all of us, no matter who, we aim at painting flesh; but we have not that *something beyond*—in short, the divine inspiration . . . which he possesses. And who else besides? Why, no one. In the eyes of his portraits I see the life of the persons; I seem to know them. I have tried to carry away the same impression from other portraits, but have not succeeded.

Do you prefer the execution of a Lady Jane Grey or a Bajazet with the limpid and *living* eyes of some chance little girl?

The quality of this incomparable artist is only to be found in the religious pictures of Italy, when the artists believed in what they painted.

Has it ever happened to you to be alone in the country at evening under a perfectly clear sky, and to be moved and possessed by a mysterious sentiment, by aspirations to the infinite; to feel as if in the expectation of some great event, of something supernatural? And have you never lost yourself in reveries transporting you to unknown worlds? . . . .

If not . . . . you will never understand, and I advise you to buy an Aurora by Bouguereau, or an historical picture by Cabanel.

All this, dear angel, to say you adore the genius of little Bastien.

Yes.

Now it's done, and you can go to bed. Amen.

Sunday, January 20th.—It's sad, but I have no friend; I love nobody, and nobody loves me.

If I have no friend, I know it is because, in spite of myself, I allow it to be seen from what a height "I look down on the crowd."

No one likes to be humiliated: I could take comfort by remembering that really superior natures have never been loved. People surround them and warm themselves in their rays, but at bottom they are execrated and slandered; whenever it's possible. There is some talk at present about raising a statue to Balzac, and the papers are publishing reminiscences and information obtained from the friends of the great man. From such friends may heaven protect one!

They seem to vie with each other as to who shall divulge a bad quality, an absurdity, a meanness.

I prefer enemies, they find less credit.

Saturday, February 28th.—The Maréchale and Claire have arrived about one o'clock to receive Madeleine Lemaire, who has come to see the picture. This lady is a celebrated painter in water-colours as well as a woman of the world; she sells her pictures at very high prices. She only made flattering remarks, naturally.

I am in a bad temper, savage. It is probably because I shall die soon; but all my life with all its details comes back to me from the beginning, foolish things that make me cry; I have never been much to balls like other girls; three or four balls in the course of the year; I might have gone often during the last two years when I could no longer enjoy them.

Is it a great artist who feels these regrets? Dear me, yes! . . . . And now? Now there are other things than balls to think of, there are conversaziones where you meet all those

who think, write, paint, work, sing, all that makes up the life of intelligent beings.

The most philosophic and thoughtful don't scout the idea of meeting the flower of the intellect of Paris once a week or twice a month. I don't know exactly why I enter into such explanations. I am going to die. I have always been unfortunate in everything! By dint of work I am making my way in society, and yet it's humiliating.

It makes one too unhappy not to hope that there is a God who will take pity on us. . . . but if this God existed would he suffer the things to happen that do; and what have I done to be so unhappy?

It is not the reading of the Bible that inspires us with faith. It is only an historical document, in which all that relates to God is childish.

We can only believe in one God . . . . abstract, philosophical, a great mystery, earth, heaven, the All. Pan.

But in that case He is a God who can do nothing for us. We admire this God, and imagine Him when looking at the stars, and thinking of scientific and spiritual questions, *à la* Renan. . . But a God who sees everything; who is occupied with everything, of whom we can ask everything . . . . In such a God I would fain believe. But if He existed would He suffer things to be as they are?

Tuesday, March 11*th.*—It rains. But that's not it. . . I feel ill. . . . Everything is so unjust. Heaven overwhelms me. . .

Well, I am still at an age when there is intoxication even in death itself.

No one, it seems to me, no one loves *everything* as I do—the fine arts, music, painting, books, society, dress, luxury, excitement, calm, laughter and tears, love, melancholy, humbug, the snow and the sunshine; all the seasons, all atmospheric effects, the silent plains of Russia, and the mountains round Naples; the frost in winter, autumn rains,

spring with its caprices, quiet summer days, and beautiful nights bright with stars. . . . I admire, I adore it all. Everything appears to me in an interesting or sublime aspect; I should like to see, possess, embrace it all, be absorbed in it, and die, since I must, in two years or in thirty—die in an ecstasy, in order to analyse this final mystery, this end of all or this divine beginning.

This universal love is not one of the sensations of consumptives; I was always like this, and remember writing something exactly like this ten years ago, in 1874, after speaking of the charms of the different seasons. Impossible to choose, for all the seasons are beautiful . . . all the year—all our life.

We want it *all!* a part is not enough.

We want nature, compared to her everything else is poor.

In short everything in life pleases me, I find it all agreeable, and while I ask for happiness I find myself happy in being miserable. My body weeps and cries, but my higher self rejoices in living all the same.

The dear good Tony Robert Fleury dines here this evening; he says my *gamins* have been much improved, that in fact it's really good, and will be noticed at the Salon.

I forgot to say that my *gamins* are called *Le Meeting.*

Wednesday, March 10*th.*—Dina's portrait won't be finished, so I shall only send *Le Meeting.*

This evening a select gathering at Mme. Hochon's; a great many artists and somebodies, like the Duchess of Uzès, the Countess Cornet, the Maréchale, and ourselves. Among artists there were Cabanel, Jalabert, Siebert, G. Ferrier, Boulanger, &c. We have some music, and Salvayre plays and sings passages from his *Henri III.* All these people were amiable to me, and Cabanel too.

Saturday, March 15*th.*—Abbema came to see my picture this morning.

It seemed as if the 15th would never come . . . . The

weather is glorious, and on Monday or Tuesday I am going to paint in the country. I won't admire Bastien-Lepage any more; I hardly know him, he is very reserved, and it is better to cultivate your own talent than to spend your energies in admiring others.

Sunday, March 16th.—The pictures have been sent. I return at half-past six, so tired and completely worn-out that it is quite a luxury. . . . You don't believe it can be? Well, to my taste, every complete sensation, pushed to its utmost limit, even if painful, is an enjoyment.

I remember when I hurt my finger once, the pain was so violent during half an hour that I enjoyed it.

It is just so with this evening's prostration; my body, offering no longer any resistance to the air, felt relaxed by a bath, and I lay full-length on the bed, with languid arms and legs, and my head full of misty incoherent things. . . . I went to sleep, now and then saying some word out loud bearing on things that were passing confusedly through my mind . . . . Cabanel, varnishing . . . . the Maréchale, Breslau . . . . painting, Algiers, the line, Wolff!

Wednesday, March 19th.—I found an orchard, and only returned at eight o'clock, very tired. People to dinner.

At the club of the Russian artists there was an election yesterday. Everybody voted for me.

Claire met a gentleman who went to see Bastien-Lepage, and found him very ill; on the following day this gentleman saw the doctor, who said: "He is very ill, but I don't believe that it is rheumatism; that's where he's ill" (tapping his stomach). Then he really is ill? He went to Blidah three or four days ago accompanied by his mother.

Saturday, March 22nd.—Have not yet begun at Sèvres, but I have found it.

Julian writes: "You are received with No. 3 at least."

What does that *at least* mean?

Thank heaven, I never doubted that I should get in.

Monday, March 24th.—For the last few days I feel in a kind of haze . . . . which cuts me off from the universe and shows me the reality in my inmost self. And so . . . . No, things are too sad for complaint . . . . it's a dull depression. I have just been re-reading an admirable book which I didn't much admire a few years ago—*Madame Bovary*.

The literary form, the style . . . . yes . . . ; in short, it is all in the execution.

But that isn't the question; through the mental fog that envelops me I see realities more clearly; such hard and bitter realities that to write them down will make me cry. But I can't even write them down. What's the good of it? What's the good of anything? To have passed six years in working ten hours a day to reach what? The beginning of talent and a mortal illness? I went to see my doctor to-day and talked so amiably that he said: "I see that you are as gay as ever."

If I persist in thinking that "fame" is to repay me for everything, I must live, and in order to live I must take care of myself.

What an outlook, what frightful *realities*.

We can never believe . . . . until . . . . I remember when I was quite little, and travelling for the first time by rail, and for the first time in contact with strangers, that I had taken up two places with all kinds of things, when two travellers came in. "These places are taken," said I, with an air of authority. "All right," replied the gentleman, "I will call the guard."

I took it for one of those *family threats*, one of those fibs I heard at home, and nothing can describe the strange chill that crept over me when the guard cleared the seat, and the traveller immediately occupied it. That was the first *reality*.

I have for a long time now tried to scare myself with thoughts of illness without believing in it. . . . . Really . . . . I would not have had time to tell you all these troubles, but I have been expecting my model, and while doing nothing I had to grumble.

There's a March wind with a grey, leaden sky.

I began a pretty large picture yesterday in the old orchard at Sèvres—a young girl sitting under a flowering apple-tree, with a path losing itself in the distance, and everywhere branches of fruit-trees in blossom, fresh green grass, violets and little yellow flowers. The woman sits dreaming with closed eyes, her head resting on her left hand with elbow on knee.

It ought to be very simple, and full of the exhalations of spring, which set the woman dreaming. There must be sunlight coming through the branches.

It is six feet wide and a little more in height.

So I have only been accepted with a No. 3, and may not be hung on the line after all.

Then I shall get utterly discouraged and hopeless; it won't be anybody's fault, since I have no talent. . . . . Yes, this shows me clearly that if I lose hope in my art, I shall die at once. If this hope should fail me, as it does this evening . . . without exaggeration there will be nothing left but death.

Thursday, March 27th.—Engrossed with my work. Why have I not yet produced anything as good in painting as the pastel done two years ago?

Monday, March 31st.—Hardly done anything; my picture will be badly hung and I shall get no medal.

After that I took a very hot bath for more than an hour, and had spitting of blood.

How foolish, you will say; possibly, but I have no common-sense left, I am discouraged and half maddened with my struggles.

What shall I say or do? if this goes on I shall be done for in eighteen months, but if I could keep a little quieter I might live another twenty years.

Yes, this No. 3 is a bitter pill to swallow. Zilhardt and Breslau have got No. 2. And I . . . . There are forty men on the selecting committee, and it seems that there were so many voices in favour of my having No. 2 that it was thought I had it. Suppose I have had fifteen voices for and twenty-five against me. Those twenty-five . . . . The committee consisted of fifteen or twenty well-known men, and the rest are intriguing nobodies who paint atrociously. That's quite notorious. Still, the fact remains, but it's a heavy blow. And yet I am clear-sighted and can *see myself;* no, there's nothing for it. . . . . I begin to think that if my picture had been very good . . . .

Ah! never, never, never have I sounded the depths of despair as I have to-day. As long as you are sliding down it is not yet death; but to touch with your feet the black and slimy bottom, to say to yourself, "It isn't the fault of circumstances, nor of your family, nor of the world, but *your own want of talent.*" Ah! it is too horrible, for there's no appeal from it, no power human or divine that can help. It's not possible to go on working, everything seems finished.

Well, here you have a complete sensation! Absolute disgust? Yes. Well, according to your theories, it should be an enjoyment—I am caught.

I don't care, I will take bromide, that'll send me to sleep; and then God is great, and I always find some little consolation after such profound grief.

But to think that I can't even tell this to any one, exchange ideas, find comfort in talking. . . . . No, there's no one, no one! . . . .

Blessed are the poor in spirit: blessed are those who have faith in a kind Providence they can appeal to! Appeal to about what? Because I have no talent?

You see for yourself. I have reached the bottom. I must enjoy it.

I should if my sufferings had any witnesses.

The sorrows of people, who have afterwards become famous are told by their friends, for they have friends—people they talk to. I have none. And if I went on lamenting! If I were to say, "No, I shall paint no more!" What then? It's no loss to any one—I have no talent.

Then all those things I have to keep to myself which don't matter to anybody. . . . This is the worst, the most humiliating of tortures—to *know*, to *feel*, to *believe* yourself that you are nothing.

If this continues I shall not survive it.

Tuesday, April 1st.—My state of mind continues the same, but as I must needs have recourse to some expedient, I say to myself that I may be mistaken. But by dint of weeping my eyes are blurred.

They say, "Oh! the number doesn't matter a bit, you know. They manage it anyhow." And what of the place?

Wednesday, April 2nd.—I have been to Petit's Exhibition, Rue de Sèze. I spent an hour looking at the incomparable pictures of Bastien-Lepage and Cazin.

Afterwards I went to Robert Fleury, saying, quite gaily, as if I were curious, "Tell me, Monsieur, how things passed at the committee?"

"Oh, very well! When your picture was shown they said—not one or two of them, but a whole group—'*Ah, that's good!*—a No. 2!'"

"Oh, Monsieur, is it possible?"

"Yes; I assure you I don't say so to please you. Then we voted, and if our president that day had not happened to be a dunderhead you would have had No. 2. Your picture was considered good, and elicited much sympathy."

"And I have No. 3."

"Yes; but only due to a kind of ill-luck—for you ought to have had No. 2."

"But what fault do they find with the picture?"

"None."

"Don't they consider it bad, then?"

"It is good; on the contrary."

"But why then?"

"It's an unfortunate accident, that's all. And if you were to get a member of the selecting committee to ask that it should be hung on the line, they would do so, for it is good."

"And you?"

"I am a member of the hanging committee, and my special function is to see that the order of the numbers is observed; but if one of us were to ask to have it changed, you may be sure I shall make no objection."

Afterwards at Julian's, who rather laughs at Robert Fleury's advice, and says that I may set my heart at rest, and that he will be much surprised if I am not on the line, and that . . . . For that matter Robert Fleury assured me, on his soul and conscience, that I deserve a No. 2, and that, morally speaking, I have it. Morally!

For it would only be simple justice.

Ah no! to ask as a favour what is due to me is too much!

Friday, April 4th.—No doubt Bastien-Lepage's exhibition is a brilliant one, but most of the pictures are old ones. There are:—first, a portrait of Mme. Drouet of last year; secondly, another portrait of 1882; thirdly, a landscape, with two laundresses, and an apple-tree in flower, also of 1882; fourthly, the picture with which he competed for the Prix de Rome (he only took the second Prix de Rome) of 1875; and there was a sketch done at Concarneau last summer—that makes five. *La Mare de Damvillers*, six; *Les Blés ou les Faucheurs*—you only see a little reaper from behind.

An old beggar carrying wood in a forest—that makes eight. The pond of Damvillers, the reapers, and the old beggar, are in full sunlight, and if any one can show me many landscape painters of such merit I shall be surprised. A great artist like him, in fact, can have no spécialité.

I know I have seen an *Andromeda* by Bastien-Lepage, which, though small, is a study of the nude such as no one else can do. It had everything — finish, character, nobility of form, grace of movement, delicacy of tones. And the treatment was at once large and refined, and the flesh painting might have been nature itself. When he wanted to produce a twilight effect he painted the *Soir au Village*, which is simply a masterpiece. This note of distinction—à la Millet—has, perhaps, been surpassed. . . . *I say à la Millet* to make myself understood, for Bastien is only like himself; and if Millet has painted evenings and moonlights, there are plenty left for others to paint, thank Heaven.

That *Soir au Village* has a magical effect: why did I not buy it?

He has also done views of London, with the Thames, where you positively see the water running—that dull heavy water which turns as it flows, so to speak. And then his little portraits are among the most beautiful things, as beautiful as any of the same kind by the old masters. And his life-size portrait of his mother can no longer be called painting at all, for it's nature itself, seen near or at a distance. And as to *Jeanne d'Arc*—that's an inspiration of genius.

He is thirty-five. Raphael died at thirty-seven, and had done more. But Raphael from the age of twelve was dandled on the knees of duchesses and cardinals, who made him work under the great Perugino, and Raphael, at fifteen, made copies of his master, which could not be distinguished from the original, and from the age of fifteen he was anointed a great artist. And as for his great canvases, as astonishing from the time they must have taken, as on account of their

qualities, his pupils did the main part of the work, so that all we have of Raphael in many of his pictures are the cartoons.

Whereas Bastien-Lepage, in order to exist in Paris during the first years, sorted letters at the Post Office from three to seven o'clock in the morning. He exhibited for the first time, I believe, in 1869.

And, in short, he found neither duchesses, cardinals, nor a Perugino. But already at his village he had taken all the prizes for drawing. I believe it was only when he was fifteen or sixteen that he came to Paris.

It is a better lot than mine, however, for *I* always lived in non-artistic surroundings, taking a few lessons in my childhood, like all children, and then about *fifteen* lessons, of an hour each, during three or four years, and always amid those same surroundings. . . . That leaves me six years and a few months; but I must deduct some journeys and a serious illness. . . . And where am I now? Am I where Bastien was in 1874? To ask myself such a question is insane.

If I were to say in society or even to artists what I write of Bastien, people would say I was a lunatic; some because they think so, others on principle, and in order not to admit the superiority of a young man.

Saturday, April 5th.—Here are my plans:—

To begin with, I shall finish the Sèvres picture, then in good earnest I shall take the statue in hand in the morning, and in the afternoon do a study from the nude—the sketch has been done to-day. This will take me to the month of July. In July I shall begin *Le Soir*, a highway without trees, a plain, with a road losing itself in the sky at sunset.

On the road a waggon drawn by two oxen, filled with hay, on which an old fellow is lying on his stomach, his chin in his hands. His profile stands out black against the setting sun. The oxen are driven by a boy.

It must be simple, grand, poetical, &c. &c.

When I have done these two or three little things which I have already begun, I shall go to Jerusalem, where I shall pass the winter for my picture and my health.

And next May Bastien will proclaim me a great artist.

I mention this, for it's interesting to see how our plans turn out.

Sunday, April 6th.—This evening my aunt has left for Russia.

Saturday, April 12th.—Julian writes that the picture is on the line.

Wednesday, April 16th.—I go to Sèvres every day, this picture possesses me. The apple-tree is in blossom; the leaves, of a light green, are beginning to come out, and the sunlight plays on this lovely verdure of spring. There are violets in the grass, and yellow flowers that burst forth like small suns. The air is balmy, and the girl who dreams, leaning against the tree is "languishing and intoxicated" as André Theuriet says. It would be fine if I succeeded in rendering this effect of sap in the spring, and of sunlight.

Tuesday, April 29th.—To-morrow is varnishing day; to-morrow morning I shall see the *Figaro*, and the *Gaulois*. What will they say? Nothing? Something good or bad?

Wednesday, April 30th.—The failure is not complete, for the *Gaulois* speaks very well of me. I have a notice all to myself. It is very *chic*, by Fourcaud, the Wolff of the *Gaulois;* and the *Gaulois*, which publishes a plan of the Salon on the same day as the *Figaro*, must have as much, or nearly as much influence, it seems to me.

The *Voltaire*, which issues a similar number, treats me like the *Gaulois*. They are capital notices.

The *Journal des Arts*, which publishes a bird's-eye view

of the Exhibition, mentions me. The *Intransigeant*, in a similar number, treats me well also. The other papers will give an account in due time. Only the *Figaro*, the *Gaulois*, and the *Voltaire*, appear with their notices on the morning of varnishing day.

Am I satisfied ? It's a simple question. Neither too much nor too little . . . .

There has been just sufficient to prevent my feeling quite miserable, that's all.

I have come back from the Salon. We only went at noon and did not leave till 5 o'clock, an hour before it closes . . I have a headache.

We remained a long time on the seat before the picture. It was much looked at, and I laughed to think that no one would suspect the artist in the elegant young lady who was sitting there with her little feet in such trim boots.

Ah ! it's ever so much better than last year, all this !

Is it a success ? In the real, serious meaning of the word of course ? Almost, I declare.

Breslau has exhibited two portraits, I have only seen one which surprised me a good deal. It's an imitation of Manet which displeases me. It is not as strong as her things used to be. To tell the truth, what I am going to say may be horrid, but I am not displeased on that account. Neither am I glad of it, however; there is room for everybody. But I confess that I prefer it should be so.

Bastien-Lepage has only his little picture of last year : *La Forge.*

It is an old blacksmith in the gloom of his smithy. Quite as good as the darkest little pictures in the Museums.

He is not well enough yet to paint. The poor architect looks sad, and says that he will throw himself into the water.

I also am sad, and believe that in spite of my painting, my sculpture, my literature, my music, yes, in spite of everything, I really believe I am bored.

Saturday, May 3rd.—Emile Bastien-Lepage comes at half-past eleven and I go down much surprised.

He has a lot of things to tell me. I have achieved a real big success.

"Not a success considered in relation to yourself or your fellow-students at the *atelier*, but a popular success.—I saw Ollendorff yesterday, who told me that if it had been a Frenchman's work the State would have bought it. 'Yes, he is a very strong man that M. Bashkirtseff.' The picture is signed M. Bashkirtseff.) Then I told him that you were a young girl, adding 'and a pretty one.' (Oh! he was quite taken aback. All the world speaks of it as a great success."

Ah! I begin to believe in it a little. For fear of believing too much, I only allow myself to feel a limited amount of satisfaction, such as you would hardly give me credit for. In short, I shall be the last to believe that people believe in me.

A true and very great artistic success, says Emile Bastien.

A success like Jules Bastien's in 1874 or '75? Oh Lord! Well, I am not yet overflowing with delight, as I can hardly believe it.

I ought to be overflowing with delight. This excellent friend asks me to sign a paper authorising Charles Baude, the engraver and an intimate friend of his brother, to engrave my picture.

Baude is going to photograph and engrave my picture for the *Monde Illustré*; that's well.

He also told me that Friant, a man of talent, is *enthusiastic* about my picture.

People I don't know speak of me, discuss and judge me. Oh what happiness! Ah! I can hardly believe it in spite of having waited and wished for it so long!

I did well to wait before giving my permission about having it photographed. I had a letter the day before yesterday asking for it. I prefer it to be Baude, he whom

Bastien-Lepage calls Charlot, and to whom he writes letters of eight pages.

I must go down to mamma's drawing-room to receive the congratulations of all the idiots who think that my painting is the amusement of a woman of the world, and who pay the same compliments to Alice and other little fools.

There !

I think it is Rosalie who feels *my success* most acutely. She is beside herself with delight, and speaks to me with the emotion of an old nurse—telling her stories, now to the right, now to the left, like a *portière*. In her eyes something has happened, an event has taken place.

Monday, May 5th.—To die is a word which is easily said and written, but to think, to *believe* that one is going to die soon ? Do I really *believe it ?* No, but I *fear it.*

It is of no use trying to hide the fact ; I am consumptive. The right lung is much damaged, and the left one has also become slightly diseased in the last year. In short, both sides are impaired, and with another kind of frame I should be almost wasted. I am rounder than most young girls, apparently, but I am not what I used to be. A year ago I was still in splendid condition, without being stout or fat ; now my arms are no longer firm, and at the upper part near the shoulders you feel the bone instead of seeing a round, firmly-shaped shoulder. I look at myself every morning while bathing. My hips are still fine but the muscles of the knee begin to show. The legs are good. In short, I am hopelessly undermined. Unhappy creature, take care of yourself ! I do take care of myself, and have cauterised both sides of my breast ; I shall not be able to wear a low dress for four months ; and I shall have to renew these cauterisations from time to time in order to *sleep.* There's no hope of getting well, it looks as if I were taking too gloomy a view,

but no, it is the simple truth. But there are so many things to do besides these cauterisations! I do them all. Cod-liver oil, arsenic, goats' milk. They have bought me a goat.

This may lengthen my life, but I am lost. Indeed, I have been too much harassed. I die of it, it's logical but horrible.

There are so many interesting things in life! Take reading alone.

I have just had a complete edition of Zola brought me, a complete one of Renan, and several volumes of Taine; I prefer Taine's *Revolution* to Michelet's. Michelet is vaporous and obscure in spite of his determination to be sublime. I like the *Revolution* better after reading Taine than Michelet, although they say that Taine wished to show its dark sides.

What of painting?

At such times we should like to believe in a kind Providence which does all for the best.

Tuesday, May 6th.—I shall lose my head over literature. I am reading the whole of Zola. He is a giant.

Dear Frenchmen, here is one more whom you seem to misunderstand!

Wednesday, May 7th.—I got a letter from Dusseldorf, asking for permission to engrave and publish my picture and other pictures by me if I have no objection. How amusing! I don't yet believe that it has happened, you know. No doubt it's a success; everybody assures me of it; nobody said so last year; last year my pastel enjoyed a small artistic success, but this year . . . . Nevertheless it's not a clap of thunder. No. And if my name is announced in a drawing-room this evening people will not turn round, unless indeed the drawing-room be full of painters. In order that . . . . a . . . . *success* should reach my heart and make me happy, it must needs be that.

Yes, it would need that at the announcement of my name all conversation should cease, and every head turn round.

There is not a paper since the opening of the exhibition in which my picture is not mentioned; but it is not yet quite what I wanted. This morning there is a leading article by Étincelle: *Les Mondaines*—women of the world—painters. It's very *chic!* I am mentioned immediately after Claire. I have as many lines as she!—I am a Greuze; I am blonde with profound eyes and the strong-willed brow of a person destined to make her mark. I am very elegant, have considerable talent, and my realism is of a good kind, in the style of Bastien-Lepage. There! That isn't all; I have the smile and captivating grace of a child! And I am not beside myself! No, not at all.

Thursday, May 8th.—I do a little work at home.

What can be the reason that Wolff has said nothing of my picture? It's possible he may not have seen it; in doing room 17 he may have been absent-minded. It can't be that I am unworthy to be noticed by this eminent critic, for he notices people far less noticeable.

In that case it is my usual ill-luck, as with No. 3. For my part I don't believe in ill-luck. It's too simple, and makes one ridiculous; it must be my want of merit.

And the surprising part of it is that it's true.

Friday, May 9th.—I read and adore Zola. His criticisms and studies are quite admirable; and I am madly in love with him. What would one not do to please a man like that! Do you think me capable of being in love like other people. Oh, heavens!

Well, then, I have loved Bastien-Lepage as I love Zola whom I have never seen, who is forty-four years old, married, and pot-bellied. Don't you think the men of the world, those men we marry, are awfully ridiculous? What on earth should I have to say to such a gentleman in the course of a day?

Emile Bastien dines with us and tells me to expect him with M. Hayem a, well-known picture-buyer, on Thursday morning.

He has pictures by Delacroix, Corot, Bastien-Lepage, and prides himself on discovering the great painters of the future.

The day after the portrait of Bastien-Lepage's grandfather was exhibited Hayem came to his studio and gave him a commission to paint the portrait of his own father.

His instinct seems to be astounding. Emile Bastien met him to-day before my picture.

"What do you think of this?"

"I think it very good; do you know the artist? Is he young?" &c., &c.

This Hayem has had his eye upon me ever since last year, when he noticed the pastel, as this year the picture.

In short, they are coming on Thursday. He wants to buy something of me.

Monday, May 12th.—After truly glacial weather we have had 28 and 29 degrees Réaumur since for days.

It is very trying. I finish the study of a little girl in the garden in hopes of the connoisseur's visit.

I forgot to say that we met Hecht on the staircase of the opera, and he was enthusiastic about my picture.

All the same, it's not yet the thing. But when Bastien-Lepage exhibited the portrait of his grandfather, it was not the right thing, either. No doubt, but never mind . . . . As I must die soon, I should like . . . .

Everything leads me to think that Bastien-Lepage has a cancer in the stomach. Is he doomed, then? Perhaps they are mistaken. The poor child can't sleep. It's ridiculous! And his concierge probably enjoys excellent health. Ridiculous!

Thursday, May 15th.—At ten o'clock this morning E. Bastien came with M. Hayem.

How funny? It doesn't seem possible. I am an artist

with talent, quite seriously. And here's a man like this M. Hayem comes to see me, and is interested in what I am doing! is it possible?

E. Bastien is quite delighted. He said to me the other day, "It seems as if it had happened to me." The dear boy is very unhappy. I don't think his brother will get over it. . . .

May 16*th.*—All this afternoon I have been walking up and down my rooms, pleased on the whole, and with little shivers running down my spine at the thought of the medal.

The medal is for the public at large; I prefer on the whole such a success as mine, *without a medal,* to some medals.

Saturday, May 17*th.*—I have returned from the Bois, where I went with the Demoiselles Staritzky, who are passing through Paris; and I found Bagnitsky, who told me that some people had been talking of the Salon at Bogoluboff's, the artist, and that some one said to some one else that my picture is like the pictures of Bastien-Lepage.

I am flattered on the whole by the attention my picture has attracted. I am envied, I am abused, I am somebody. And I may be permitted to pose a little if it please me.

Nothing of the kind, for I say in a pained voice, "Don't you think it's dreadful; is it not enough to depress me? I have passed six years, the best six years of my life, in working like a galley-slave; seeing no one and denying myself every pleasure! At the end of six years I produce a good piece of work, and there are persons who actually say I have been helped!" The reward of taking so much trouble is changed to an atrocious calumny!

I am standing on a bear's skin while I say this, with slackly hanging arms, sincere yet shamming at the same time. Then my mother takes it quite seriously, and drives me to despair.

Here is mamma: "Suppose they give the honorary medal to X——" I naturally exclaim that it would be a shame,

an insult, that I am indignant, furious, &c. Mamma: "No, no, don't be so excited! Good heavens! they haven't given it him! It's not true! He hasn't got it. And if they have given it him it's done on purpose; they know your temper, they know it'll drive you frantic. And they do it on purpose, and you are taken in like a little goose; isn't it so?" . . . .

It's not even an accusation, only a premature supposition; wait till X—— has his honorary medal and you will see!

Another example. The novel of the contemptible Y——, who is at present the fashion, has reached I don't know how many editions. I started with indignation. Never! is this the garbage which the majority devour and prefer? *O tempora! O mores!* Will you bet that mamma begins holding forth again as before? It has happened already on various occasions. She is afraid that I shall break down, that I shall die at the least shock, and in her immense *naïveté,* she wishes to shield me by means which will end in giving me a brain fever.

Say X, Y, or Z comes and tells us, "Do you know that the ball at Larochefoucauld's was splendid?"

I grow depressed.

Mamma notices it, and five minutes afterwards she begins telling something, as if casually, in order to belittle the ball in my opinion; unless, indeed, she tries to prove to me that there hasn't been any ball at all.

We have had that too. Childish inventions and excuses being made, while I am fuming with rage to think it could be supposed I could swallow them!

Tuesday, May 20th.—At the Salon at ten o'clock with M. H——. He says that my picture is so good that people say I have been helped.

How shameful!

He has also the impudence to say that Bastien could never compose a picture, that he can paint portraits, and that

his pictures are only portraits, but that he can't paint the nude. This Jew is astounding.

He refers to the medal, and says he will attend to it; that he knows all the members on the committee, &c.

On coming away we go to see Robert Fleury. I tell him, in an excited tone, that they accuse me of not having painted my picture.

He has heard nothing of the kind; he said it was never thought of by the committee, and should they say so he would be there. He thinks me much more moved than I really am, and we take him back to lunch that he may calm and comfort us. How can you allow everything to move you so much? Such filth should be sent flying with a kick.

"I wish they would say it before me in the committee," he exclaimed, "I would put a stop to it. If any one dare say so, I shall make him repent, I can tell you."

"Oh! thank you, Monsieur."

"Not at all, this is not a question of friendship, it's the simple truth, and I know it better than any one."

He goes on assuring us of these pleasant things, and of the chances I have of getting the medal,—one can never tell;—but it seems that there are a good many chances in my favour.

Saturday, May 24th.—It is just a year since it was finished. But this year the Salon will only reopen on Tuesday; so that that day corresponds to the 21st May of last year. The first and second class medals have been adjudged to-day. To-morrow will come the turn of the third class.

It is hot, and I am tired. The *France Illustrée* asks for permission to reproduce my picture. Also somebody named Lecadre. I sign, I sign: Reproduce!

They evidently give medals for things much inferior to my picture! Oh, I am quite calm; real talent is sure to come to the front, for all that; only it retards and bothers you. I prefer not to count upon it. An honorary mention

has been promised me without fail; the medal is problematical, but it would be unjust!

Evidently!

Sunday, May 25th.—What am I doing since the first of May? Nothing. And why? Oh wretchedness!

I have come back from Sèvres. Oh, it's dreadful! The landscape has changed so completely that I can do nothing with it. It is no longer spring. And my apple blossom has turned yellow (in the picture); I had used oils, but I am an idiot, I have set it right again; we shall see. But this picture must be finished; what with the Salon, the newspapers, the rain, H——, and all that nonsense, I have lost twenty-five days; it is madness, but it's done.

My medal will be put to the vote to-day, it's four o'clock, and raining in torrents. Last year I was sure of getting it. and vexed at the *delay* of positive news. This year it is not certain, and I am much calmer; a year has passed since I ought to have had it, but I dreaded the *unexpected,* and it vexed me considerably. To get it, and yet not to get it, that is to get it for a pastel made me quite unhappy. Now that I understand how beautiful that pastel is, I rejoice at it.

This year it will be yes or no; it's quite simple. If it is yes, I shall know it at eight o'clock this evening. So I shall go and sit down in Turkish fashion in the big easy-chair near the window, and look out of the window with my elbows on the arms of the easy-chair. And that for four hours!

It is twenty minutes past five, and I am not more bored than when I am doing nothing without expecting anything.

And to think of the oil which has spoilt my flowers! On seeing it, my forehead grew moist. Let us hope that it won't show too much. . . . In two hours I shall know. You may fancy that I am greatly agitated about it. No, I tell you—not much more so than when, depressed and alone, I pass a whole afternoon in doing nothing.

In any case, to-morrow's papers will tell me the result.

I am sick at heart with waiting, burning and wet with perspiration, and my head aches.

Oh! I shall not have it; and it worries me on account of mamma's emotion. I don't like other people to intrude on my private affairs and share my feelings. I suffer from it, as from an indelicacy. Whether I am burning, or drenched, or no matter what, they ought to leave me in peace. It exasperates me to think that mamma should imagine that I suffer.

There is a fog, and the air is heavy! My throat is compressed, up to the jaws and ears.

Thirty-five minutes past seven. I am called to dinner. It is finished.

Monday, May 26th.—I am better. Instead of that depressing expectation, I am indignant. And that's a feeling outside one, and rather refreshing. They voted thirty-six third-class medals yesterday, and six remain. M—— has his medal for Julian's portrait.

How explain the affair? For in short they have bestowed rewards on comparatively poor things.

Unfairness? I don't much like this reason, as it suits nobodies.

They may like my painting more or less, but they cannot overlook that here are seven well-grouped life-size children with a background which also counts for something. All those whose opinion is worth anything find it very good or good; some there are who say that I can't have done it quite alone—even to old Robert Fleury, who likes the picture without knowing why it is good.

And Boulanger goes about saying that he does not care for this style, but that, all the same, it is powerful and even very interesting.

What next? . . . .

They have given medals to downright nobodies! I

know well that it is the rule. But, on the other hand, every artist of real talent has had his medals. So that, although some daubers have medals, there is not a man of talent without them. And then ? And then ? I, too, have eyes. My picture is a composition.

Suppose I had dressed up these boys in mediæval costumes, and painted them in a studio—which is much easier—with a background of tapestry ?

Why, I should have produced an historical picture which would have been much appreciated in Russia.

What am I to believe ?

Here comes another request to engrave my picture, from Baschet, the great publisher.

It's the fifth permission I have signed. What next ?

Tuesday, May 27th.—It is over. I have nothing.

How horribly vexing ! I went on hoping till this morning. And if you knew what things have had medals given them ! ! !

Why am I not discouraged ? How surprising ! If my picture is good, why has it no reward ?

Intrigues, you will say.

All the same, since it is good, why is it not rewarded ? I won't pose as an innocent child who has no notion of intrigues ; yet it seems to me that, given a good thing . . . .

Then the reason is that it's bad ? Not at all.

I have eyes, even for myself . . . . and then the opinion of others ! And the forty newspapers !

Thursday, May 29th.—Having been feverish all night, I am in a state of raging irritation—in fact, nervous to the pitch of madness. It is not entirely due to the medal, but to the sleepless night.

I am too wretched ; I must believe in God. Is it not natural to seek a Supernatural Power when all is misery and

misfortune, and there's no salvation? We try to believe in a Power above, that we have only to pray to . . . . This operation necessitates neither fatigue nor disappointment, nor humiliation, nor worry. You pray. The physicians are impotent; you ask for a miracle which does not happen, but, at the time of asking, it consoles you. It's very little; God must be just; and if He is, how can it be? . . . . Reflect for a second, and you believe no longer, alas!. Why live? What's the use of dragging such misery along? Death at least offers this advantage—that you will learn the truth about this famous other life. Unless there's nothing. Well, one will find out on dying.

Friday, May 30th.—I consider I am very foolish for not being seriously preoccupied with the only thing worth troubling about—the only thing which gives all sorts of happiness, which obliterates all sufferings—love; of course love. Two beings that love each other are convinced of their absolute perfection, moral and physical, but especially moral. A being who loves you, is just, good, loyal, generous—ready to perform the most heroic actions quite simply.

Two beings who love each other are under the illusion that the world is admirable and perfect, such as philosophers like Aristotle and myself have imagined it. In this, I believe, consists the great attraction of love.

In family relationships, in friendship, in the world, in everything, you discover the trail of human meanness. Now it's a flash of cupidity, now of folly; now you find envy, baseness, injustice, infamy—in short, our best friend has his hidden thoughts, and, as Maupassant says, man is always *alone,* for he cannot read the intimate thoughts of his best friend who sits opposite and looks at him, and sincerely confides in him.

Well, love performs this miracle of the mingling of souls . . . . It's an illusion? No matter. *That which you*

believe, exists for you! I tell you so. Love makes the world appear as it ought to be. If I were God . . . .

Well, what then ?

Saturday, May 31*st*.—Villevielle came to tell me that they did not give me a medal because I made a row last year about the honorary mention, and I loudly proclaimed the committee for a set of fools. . . .

It's true I did say so.

May-be my painting is wanting in breadth and freshness ; for if it were not, *Le Meeting* would be a masterpiece. Do they expect masterpieces for third-class medals ? Baude's engraving has appeared, with an article, in which it says that the public is disappointed at my not getting a medal. . . . . My colour is dry ! ! But the same thing is said of Bastien.

Has any one the courage to say that M——'s portrait is better than my picture ?

M. Bastien-Lepage had eight votes for his *Jeanne d'Arc*, M. M—— has had a medal, and the enormous M—— has just had twenty-eight votes—exactly twenty more than I ! There is neither conscience nor justice. What am I to believe ? I can make neither head nor tail of it. I went down-stairs when H—— came, to let this Jew see that I am not depressed.

I had quite a contented and aggressive manner, and went on talking of photographs, engravers, picture-buyers, &c., till this son of Israel finally made up his mind to say that he would like to have some dealings with me . . . . although I have not had a medal. . . . "I will buy your pastel (Armandine) and the head of the baby that laughs." Two ! He speaks to Dina in order that she may manage matters ; but we send him to Emile Bastien to settle about the price. I am much pleased.

Sunday, June 1st.—I have not done anything for the last month, owing to all this. Yes, I have been reading Sully-Prudhomme since yesterday morning. I have two volumes here, and I find it very good . . . . I don't trouble much about the versification; it only troubles me when it's bad, and annoys me. I am only concerned with the idea that's expressed. If they like to rhyme, let them rhyme! But don't let me notice it. But I am infinitely pleased with the truly subtle ideas of Sully-Prudhomme. And there is in him something very lofty, almost abstract —something very delicate, very quintessential, which exactly harmonises with my way of feeling.

I have just read—now lying on the divan, now walking up and down my balcony—the preface to Lucretius and the book itself, *De Natura Rerum.* Those who know what it is will praise me for it . . . .

A great mental effort is required to understand it all. It must be difficult reading even for those who are in the habit of treating this subject. I have understood it all. At times I lost the meaning, and I went over it again and forced myself to catch it . . . . I ought to respect Sully-Prudhomme for writing things which I catch with an effort.

The treatment of these ideas is as familiar to him as the treatment of colours is to me. . . . So he ought also to have a pious veneration for me, because with a *few muddy pigments,* as the antipathetic Th. Gautier has said, I produce faces which express human feelings—pictures where you see Nature, trees, atmosphere, perspectives. He must think himself a thousand times superior to us artists while thus *uselessly* sounding the mechanism of human thought. What does he teach himself and others?

The manner in which the mind acts by labelling all those swift intangible movements of the intellect. . . . As for me, poor ignoramus, I think that this subtle philosophy

will not teach anything to anybody; it's an analysis, a delicate and difficult amusement, but what's the good? Is it by learning to give names to all those abstract and wonderful things that those geniuses will be formed who will write fine books? or those extraordinary thinkers who march in the van of the world?

He says further that man can only know as much of the object as he is related to, &c. Most of those who read me will make nothing of it, but I will still quote the following: "It follows that science cannot exceed the knowledge of our categories applied to our perceptions." Good! it is evident that we cannot understand more than we can understand. That's clear.

Had I had a sensible education I should be very remarkable. I taught myself everything. I drew up the plan of my studies with the professors of the High School at Nice, who could not believe their eyes. Partly by intuition, partly guided by the books I read, I wanted to know such and such things. Thus I read Greek and Latin, the French and English classics, modern literature and all.

But it's a chaos, although I try to arrange it all owing to my love of harmony in all things.

Who is Sully-Prudhomme? I bought his books six months ago, and after trying to read them put them aside as pretty verses; but now I discover things in them worthy of captivating me, and I read them all in one sitting, owing to François Coppée's visit. But Coppée did not speak of them; nor has any one else. What connection can there be therefore?

By very great mental efforts I should succeed, apparently, in a philosophical analysis of this intellectual work. But to what purpose? Would it change in aught my manner of thinking?

Thursday, June 5th.—Prater is dead. He grew up with

me, for he was bought for me at Vienna in 1870; he was three weeks old, and always got behind our boxes among the parcels we bought.

He has been my faithful and devoted dog, howling when I went out, and waiting for hours, sitting at the window. In Rome I took a fancy to another dog, and Prater with his yellow hair and admirable eyes was taken care of by mamma, but remained very jealous of me. To think how heartless I was! . . . .

We called the new dog Pincio; he was stolen in Paris. Instead of taking to Prater again, I stupidly enough got Coco the First, and then my present Coco. It was mean; it was contemptible. During four years these two creatures fought each other, and the upshot was that Prater was locked up in a top room, where he lived like a prisoner, while Coco walked about the table and on people's heads. He died of old age. I passed two hours with him since yesterday; he dragged himself towards me, and laid his head on my knees.

Ah! I am a nice wretch with my tender sentiments. What a contemptible character! I weep as I am writing, and think that the traces of these tears will secure me the reputation of a good heart with my readers. I always intended adopting the unhappy beast again, and it always ended in my only giving him a piece of sugar and a passing caress.

You should have seen his tail then—his poor tail that had been cut, which he wagged so fast, so fast that it seemed to make a wheel with the rapidity of the motion.

The poor thing is not dead yet; I thought he was, as he was not in his room; but he had crept behind some box or bath, as formerly in Vienna, while I thought they had taken him away, fearing to speak of it to me. . . . But he can't last over this evening or to-morrow. . . .

Tony Robert Fleury found me in tears. I had written to

ask him something connected with the reproduction of my picture, and he came. It seems that I had omitted signing a little paper by which they might prevent others from reproducing my picture, and involved me in a lawsuit. You understand that I am very proud of all these requests for my permission, and that I should be proud even of a lawsuit.

Friday, June 6th.—I am much preoccupied by the reception at the Embassy, for fear lest something should mar the effect. I can never believe in any good thing whatsoever. . . . It looks well enough; but something will happen, some hindrance. It is so long since I have vainly cried for all these things.

We have been to the Salon—I, in order to see the picture of the medal—and, as we met Tony Robert Fleury, I asked, before the second-class medals, what he would say to me if I were to bring him such pictures as these.

"Well, I hope that you will take good care not to produce such painting as this," he answered, quite seriously.

"And what of the second medal, then?"

"Well, but it's by a young man who has exhibited for a long time, and so . . . . you see . . . ."

What a mass of mediocrities! How depressing it is!

The pictures with the medals are not even atrocious; they are, for the most part, drearily commonplace or bad. . . And the others! . . . On the whole, this exhibition is very bad.

Saturday, June 7th.—We are preparing in silence for the solemn event of this evening.

This is my gown:—White silk muslin; the front of the bodice is formed by crossing draperies, the ends of these draperies being fastened in knots on the shoulders. The sleeve is short, consisting also of the knotted ends of the

muslin. A very broad sash of white satin, fastened with flowing ends behind. The skirt consists of a front breadth draped from left to right, and falling to the feet. Behind are two double rows of gathered muslin—one falling straight to the ground, the other rather shorter. Nothing in the hair. Plain white shoes. The general effect is enchanting. The hair must be dressed *à la Psyche* with this costume. I think the gown exceedingly graceful. The drapery in front is like a dream. It is so simple and so delicate that I ought to look pretty. Mamma is going to wear a gown of black damask trimmed with jet, a very long train, and her diamonds.

Sunday, June 8th.—I looked as well as I can look, or as I ever did. My gown produced an enchanting effect. . . . And my face was as blooming again as at Nice or at Rome.

Those who see me every day were quite taken aback.

We arrived rather late. Madame Fridericks was not with the Ambassadress, with whom mamma exchanged a few words. I am quite calm, and quite at my ease. . . . A good many acquaintances. Madame d'A——, whom I have met at the Gavinis, and who used not to bow to me, now does so very amiably. I take Gavini's arm, who looks well with his ribbons and his Orders. He introduces Menabrea, the Italian Minister, to me, and we talk art. Then M. de Lesseps tells me a long story of nurses and babies and Suez Canal shares. We remained a good while with him. I had Chevreau's arm.

As to the others—the private secretaries and Attachés of Embassies—I forsake them for the old men covered with Orders.

A little later, having duly sacrificed to glory, I have a chat with all the artists present; they got themselves introduced, being very curious to see me. But I was so pretty and so well dressed that they will be convinced that I don't paint my pictures alone. There were Cheremetieff; Lehmann, a very sympathetic old man of some talent; and

lastly Edelfeldt, who has talent—a handsome fellow, rather vulgar, from Russian Finland. In short, it was very nice. The chief thing, you see, is to be pretty. That's everything.

Tuesday, June 10th.—Good heavens, what an interesting thing is the street! The physiognomies of people, the peculiarities of each, the plunges you take into unknown souls.

Make it all live—or, I should say, catch hold of the life of each. You paint a fight of Roman gladiators, whom you have never seen, from Parisian models. Why not paint Parisian wrestlers from the mob of Paris? In five or six centuries it will be ancient, and the fools of the future will venerate it.

Saturday, June 14th.—Much company on mamma's fête-day. I was most elegant! Pure Louis XVI. gown of grey taffeta, with a waistcoat of white silk muslin.

I have been to Sèvres, but returned quickly. I had taken a very good model with me. Ah! a model is not a genuine country girl, and I shall again take to our woman who washes up dishes. Armandine won't do; you can't help feeling that she has danced at the Eden Theatre.

In short, I, who pride myself on painting people's character, would have turned out a young woman of the streets dressed up as a peasant girl. I want a real big goose of a girl, who dreams, overcome by the heat, and who will yield to the first peasant who chances on her. This Armandine is of an ideal stupidity; I make her talk.

When folly does not irritate, it amuses us; you listen with a benevolent curiosity, and then I get an insight into manners! . . . . and I round off these glimpses by my intuition, which I shall call remarkable, if you will allow me.

Monday, June 16th.—This evening we go to see *Macbeth* (Richepin's translation), and Sarah Bernhardt. The Gavinis are with us.

I go so seldom to the theatre that it amuses me. But the declamations of actors pain my artistic sense. How beautiful it would be if these people would talk naturally! Oh! what declamations!

Marais (Macbeth) is good every now and then, but he is guilty of such false theatrical intonations that it is pitiful. As for Sarah, she is always admirable, although her golden voice has become an ordinary one.

Tuesday, June 17th.—How my picture worries me! And the hands are still to do! I am no longer interested in that apple-tree in blossom and those violets. And that slumbering peasant girl! A canvas a yard long would be large enough. And I am doing it life-size! It's spoilt. And three months thrown away! . . . .

Wednesday, June 18th.—Still at Sèvres. The most aggravating part of it is that I am feverish every day. Impossible to get fat. . . . . Yet I take six or seven tumblers of goat's milk a day.

Friday, June 20th.—The architect writes me from Algiers. I ended the letter I sent with our three heads, each having a medal round the neck. Jules with the medal of honour, I with a first-class medal, and the architect a second-class one for next year. I have also sent him a photograph of *Le Meeting.* And he tells me that he showed everything to his brother, who was very glad to get an idea of the picture, of which he had heard so much, and who exclaimed—

"What fools they are not to have given a medal to this picture, which I think exceedingly good!" He would much

have liked to write to me, but it's impossible. He continues to suffer much, but, in spite of his sufferings, he has decided to return in a week from now. He bade the architect assure me of his friendship, and thank me for the embroidery.

A year ago I should have been in ecstasy. He would like to write to me! I only enjoy it—in retrospect; for at the present moment I am well-nigh indifferent to it.

At the bottom of the page there is my head with the medal of honour for 1886.

He must have been touched by the delicate manner in which I comforted his brother in my letter. The letter began seriously, containing "encouraging words," and ended playfully, which is my usual way.

Wednesday, June 25th.—Re-read my diaries of 1875, 1876, and 1877. I complain in them of I know not what; I have aspirations towards something indefinite. Every evening I felt sore and discouraged, spending my strength in fury and despair in trying to find *what to do*. Go to Italy? Stop in Paris? Get married? Paint? What was to be done? If I went to Italy I couldn't be in Paris and I wanted to be everywhere at once!! What vigour there was in it all!!!

As a man, I should have conquered Europe. Young girl as I was, I wasted it in excesses of language and silly eccentricities. Oh, misery!

There are moments when we naïvely fancy ourselves capable of anything. "If I had the time I would do sculpture, I would write, I would be a musician."

It's a fire that consumes you. And death is at the end, inevitable—let me be consumed by vain desires or not.

But if I am nothing, if I am destined to be nothing, why these dreams of glory since I can remember anything?

Why these mad aspirations towards greatness which I formerly imagined to consist in riches and titles? Why, from the time that I had two consecutive ideas, from the age of four, this desire for things glorious, grand, confused, but immense? Ah, what have I not been in my childish dreams! . . . . To begin with, I was a dancer, a famous dancer adored in Petersburg. Every evening I would make them put me on a low dress, with flowers in my hair, and dance quite gravely in the drawing-room with the whole household looking on. Then I was the first singer in the world. I accompanied myself on the harp while singing, and I was carried in triumph—I don't know where, or by whom. Next I electrified the masses with my eloquence. The Emperor of Russia married me to keep on his throne, and I lived in close communion with my people, and in the speeches I made explained my policy till sovereigns and people were moved to tears.

And then I was in love. The man I loved betrayed me; and if he did not betray me, he died of some accident or other—most frequently of a fall from his horse, just at the moment when I felt that I loved him less. Then I fell in love with another; but it all went very satisfactorily and morally, since they always died or betrayed me. I got over their deaths; but when I was betrayed, I felt endless disgust and despair, and died at last.

In short, my dreams of everything, concerning all branches of activity, all sentiments, all human satisfactions, were larger than nature; and if they can't be realised, I had better die.

Why did not my picture get a medal?

The medal . . . . They must have thought (many of them) that I was assisted. It has happened already that medals have been given to women who had their pictures painted for them, and once you have received

your medal you have the right to claim admittance the next year, although you send the most horrible daubs.

And I who am young, elegant, and mentioned in the papers. All those people are alike . . . . Breslau is an example. She told my model that if I went to fewer balls I should have a great deal more talent. All these people fancy that I go out every evening. How deceptive are appearances. The mere supposition that the picture is not mine; it's too serious; heaven forbid any one should have said so! T. Robert Fleury told me he was surprised at the result, for every time he spoke of me to his colleagues on the committee, they said: "*It's very good; it is a very interesting thing.*"

"What is one to think after they had said that?" asked Robert Fleury.

Then *it is* this doubt . . . .

Friday, June 27th. — Just as we are going out to take a turn in the Bois, the architect comes to the carriage. They have arrived this morning, and he comes to tell us that Jules is a little better. That he stood the voyage well, but that unfortunately he can't go out. He would have been so pleased to tell me what a success my picture has had with all those to whom he has shown the photograph in Algiers.

"Then we will go and see him to-morrow," said Mamma.

"You could not give him a greater pleasure; he says that your picture . . . . but no, he will tell you himself; that will be better."

Saturday, June 28th.—So we go to the Rue Legendre. He rises at first to receive us, and takes a few steps in the room; I fancied he seemed ashamed of being so changed.

So changed—oh! so changed. But it is not from the

stomach he suffers. I am not a physician, but he does not look as if it were.

But I find him so changed that I can only say:—"And so you have come back?" He is not repulsive, and so winning at once, so friendly, so kind about my pictures, telling me over and over again not to mind about medals, that success suffices.

I make him laugh at his illness by saying that he required it, and that it was good for him, as he was beginning to get fat.

The architect seemed delighted at seeing his invalid so gay and amiable. Thus encouraged, I become very talkative. He pays me compliments on my gown and down to the handle of my umbrella. He made me sit down at his feet on the lounge . . . . Poor thin legs! . . . His eyes grown bigger and very clear, the hair in a tangle.

But he is very interesting, and as he wishes it I will go and see him again.

The architect, who accompanies us down-stairs, says the same thing. "It gives Jules so much pleasure, and he is so happy to see you; he says you have a great deal of talent, I give you my word!"

I dwell on the manner in which they received me, as it gives me much pleasure.

But it is a maternal feeling, very calm, very tender, and which I am proud of as if it were a force. He will get over it, surely.

Monday, June 30th.—I had to hold myself in perforce not to cut my canvas in pieces with a knife. There isn't an inch of it as I should like it.

And still a hand to do! But when that hand is done there is so much to re-touch ! ! ! Oh misery! damnation!

Three months gone, three months!

No ! ! !

I amused myself in arranging a basket of strawberries such as you never saw before. I gathered them myself with their stems, regular bunches, there were even green ones for colour's sake. And such leaves! . . . In short, marvellous strawberries, gathered by an artist in the most fantastic and whimsical manner, as when you are doing something unaccustomed.

And amongst it a whole bunch of red currants. In this fashion I went through the streets of Sèvres, holding the basket on my knees in the tramway, but careful to hold it so that the air could pass under it, lest the heat of my body should wither the strawberries, of which not one had a spot or a bruise.

Rosalie laughed. "If some one at home were to see you, Mademoiselle."

Is it possible?

But it's for the sake of his painting, which is worth it—not for his face, which is not. But his painting deserves all kinds of attention. . . . Then is it his picture that will eat the strawberries?

Tuesday, July 1st.—Still that odious Sèvres!

But I come home early, at five o'clock. It's nearly done.

But I am mortally sad, everything goes wrong.

I require some powerful antidote. And I, who don't believe in God, I rely on Him.

After days of intolerable misery, something has always happened to make me take to life again.

O God, why do you allow us to reason, I wish so much to believe unconditionally!

I believe or I don't believe; when I begin to reason I can't believe in it. But in moments of misery or of joy, deep down in my heart the first thought is of this God who is so hard on me.

Wednesday, July 2nd.—We have been to see Jules Bastien, in his studio this time. I really think he is better. His mother was there. She is better-looking than her portrait; she's a woman of sixty, who looks at most forty-five to fifty. Her hair, of rather a pretty blonde shade, scarcely shows any grey; a sweet smile; in short, a very sympathetic woman, very erect in her black-and-white gown; she does very pretty embroidery from designs of her own invention.

Bastien-Lepage has his two front teeth a little apart, like mine.

Thursday, July 3rd.—This morning at seven o'clock I went to see Potain. He examined me rather superficially, and sends me to Eaux-Bonnes. After that he will see. But I have his letter here, which he writes to his colleague at the watering place. I have opened it.

He says in it that the lung is attacked at the top, on the right-hand side, and that I am the most undisciplined and imprudent invalid in the world.

As it was not yet eight o'clock I went to the little doctor in the Rue de l'Echiquier. I think he is a serious sort of fellow, for he looks disagreeably surprised at my condition, and lays great stress on my consulting one of the leaders of the profession—Bouchard or Grancher, etc.

On my refusing, he says he will go with me if only I will go. So I agree.

Potain will have it that I have been much worse, and that my condition has improved in an unexpected way, that now the symptoms have returned, but that they may be amended.

He is so optimistic that I must be low indeed.

Little B—— is not of his opinion; he says that I have been worse, but that the disease was acute at that time; and that they feared it would get worse very rapidly;

that it had not done so, and this was the unexpected improvement. Whereas now it's an aggravation of the chronic disease . . . . In short, he is resolved to take me to Grancher.

I will go.

Consumptive, ah !

That and the other things . . . . and all. It isn't funny. And nothing pleasant to comfort me a little !

Friday, July 4th.—The Sèvres picture is here in the studio. It might be called *April*. It doesn't matter, but this April seems so bad to me ! ! !

The background is an intense and yet muddy green. The woman isn't at all what I wanted her to be, not at all.

I have put it together anyhow, and it has nothing of the feeling I wished to express. In short, I have muddled away the months.

Saturday, July 5th.—I have a charming grey linen gown, the bodice made like a blouse, for the studio, without an atom of trimming except the lace at the throat and sleeves. An ideal hat with a big coquettish knot of old lace. So I felt strongly inclined to go to the Rue Legendre, seeing I looked so well, only it's too soon ; but why ? I must just go as a comrade, an admirer, a good fellow, as he is so ill.

And we go. His mother is enchanted, taps me on the shoulder, praises my beautiful hair . . . . The architect continues to look crushed ; since the affair of the monument he seems in despair ; and the great painter is better.

He takes his beef-tea and egg in our presence ; his mother comes and goes, carries everything herself to prevent the servant coming in ; waits upon him with her own hands. He seems to take it quite naturally, accepts our services calmly, and without surprise. Talking of his looks somebody remarks that he ought to have his hair cut, and Mamma begins

telling us that she used to cut her son's hair when he was little, and her father's when he was ill. "Would you like me to cut it for you, I bring luck?"

We laugh, but he consents at once, his mother goes to fetch a dressing-gown, and Mamma sets about the operation, and acquits herself successfully.

I also wished to give a snip with the scissors; but the creature says that I shall do mischief, and I take my revenge by comparing him to Samson and Delila! My next picture.

He deigns to laugh.

His brother thus encouraged, proposes to trim his beard as well, and does it slowly, religiously, with hands that tremble a little.

It quite alters his countenance, and he looks no longer so ill and changed; his mother gives little cries of delight. "At last I see my dear little boy, my dear child!"

What a good woman, so simple, so kind, so full of adoration for her great man of a son!

They are good people.

Friday, July 14*th.*—I have begun the treatment which is to cure me. I feel quite calm.

Even to my painting, which looks better.

How suggestive are the people on the Boulevard des Batignolles, and even Avenue Wagram!

Have you looked at them? Looked at the streets, and the passers by?

What a lot a seat contains! what novels! what dramas! The outcast with furtive looks, resting one arm on the back of the seat and the other on his knees; the woman with the child on her knees; a woman of the people who runs errands; the grocer's boy, in high spirits, who has sat down to read a little newspaper; the workman asleep; the philosopher or hopeless wretch who sits smoking. I see too much,

possibly. . . . And yet look well at five or six o'clock in the evening.

I have it, I have it, I have it!

It seems to me I have found something.

Yes, yes, yes; I shall perhaps not do it, but my mind is at rest. It makes me dance on one foot. One has such different moods.

Sometimes I really see *nothing* in life; and sometimes. . . I find myself again in love with everything, everything that surrounds me!

It's like a refluent tide of life! And yet I have no cause for rejoicing.

Ah, never mind, I shall discover a gay and adorable side even to my death-bed; I was made to be very happy, but . . .

> *Pourquoi dans ton œuvre céleste.*
> *Tant d'éléments si peu d'accord?* . . .

Tuesday, July 15th.—I come back to an old plan, which quite engrosses me, every time I see the good people on the public seats. It might be a grand study. It is always better to paint scenes in which the people don't move. Don't misunderstand me, I am not against action, but there can be neither illusion nor enjoyment in scenes of violent action to a refined public. You are painfully (though unconsciously) impressed by an arm which is raised to strike, and which doesn't, by those boys who are running yet remain in the same place. There are situations full of movement where it is nevertheless possible to imagine a few moments of immobility, which is enough.

It is always better to choose the moment following on a striking or violent action of any kind, than the one preceding it. The *Jeanne d'Arc* of Bastien-Lepage had heard voices, she has gone quickly forward, upsetting her spinning-wheel, and has suddenly stopped, leaning against a tree. But look at scenes where people are in the *midst*

of action, with their arms raised ; it may be very powerful, but complete enjoyment is never possible.

Look at the distribution of the flags by the Emperor which is at Versailles.

They rush forward with lifted arms; and yet it's very good, for these arms were *waiting*, and we are stirred, moved, carried out of ourselves, by the emotion of these men; we share their impatience. The impulse and movement are tremendous, just because *we can picture to ourselves* a *moment's standstill* during which we can look at this scene *in peace* as if it were an *actual event* and not a picture.

But nothing is comparable to the grandeur of subjects in repose, either in sculpture or painting.

A man of middling talent may succeed in producing a sensational picture, but he will never make anything of subjects in repose.

Look at Millet's canvases, and compare them to all the painted exaggerations imaginable.

Look at the Moses of Michael Angelo. He is motionless and yet *he is living*. His *Thinker* neither stirs nor speaks, but it is because he does not wish to; he is a *living* man absorbed in his thoughts.

The *Pas Mèche* of Bastien-Lepage looks at and listens to you, but he is going to speak, for he lives.

In *Les Foins*, the man lying on his back with his face covered by a hat, is asleep, but he lives. The woman sits dreaming and does not move, but you feel she is living.

It is only a subject in repose that can give us perfect satisfaction, it gives us time to get absorbed in it, to enter into it, and feel it living.

The foolish and ignorant fancy it is *easier to do*. Oh, misery!

If I ever die it will be of indignation at human stupidity, which, as Flaubert says, is infinite.

Admirable things have been written in Russia during the last thirty years.

In reading Count Tolstoï's *La Paix et la Guerre,* I was so struck that I couldn't help exclaiming—

"Why, it's like Zola!"

It is true they have devoted an essay to-day to our Tolstoï in *La Revue des Deux Mondes,* and my Russian heart leaps for joy. The study is by M. de Vogüé, who has been secretary at the Embassy in Russia, and has studied the literature and manners of the country, and who has already published several remarkably just and profound articles on my great and admirable native land.

And you wretch! You live in France, you prefer being a *foreigner* to remaining at home! Since you love your beautiful, great, sublime Russia, go thither and work for her.

I also work for the glory of my country . . . if ever I have a great talent like Tolstoï!

But if it were not for my painting, *I would go!* On my word of honour I would go! But my work absorbs my faculties, and the rest is merely an interval, an amusement.

Monday, July 21st.—I have been out walking for four hours looking for a corner to take as background for my picture. It's the street, it's the outer boulevard, but I have still to choose.

Evidently a public seat on the outer boulevard has infinitely more character than a seat in the Champs Élysées, where only concierges, grooms, nurses, and mashers, sit down.

There you get no study of character, no soul, no drama; only mannikins, except in some special instances.

But what poetry in that outcast on the edge of the seat! There man is genuine, there we get Shakespeare!

And now an insane uneasiness has seized me lest this treasure I have discovered should escape me! If I should not be able to do it or if the time, if . . . .

Listen, if I have no talent, heaven must be turning me into ridicule, for it makes me suffer all the tortures of artists of genius . . . . Alas!

Wednesday, July 23rd.—I have sketched in my picture and found the models. I have been running about La Villette and Batignolles since five o'clock in the morning. Rosalie goes up to the people I point out to her.

I can tell you it's not easy or comfortable.

Friday, August 1st.—If I dish you up moving phrases don't let yourself be caught by them.

Of the two selves who are trying to live, one says to the other:—"But in heaven's name have a sensation of some kind!" And the other one, who attempts to feel something, is always dominated by the first, by the *Moi-Spectateur*, which continues observing and absorbing the second.

And will it always be so?

And love?

Well, to tell you the truth, it seems impossible when you see human nature through the microscope. The others are very happy, they only see what is necessary.

Would you like to know? Well, then, I am neither painter, nor sculptor, nor musician; neither woman, nor daughter, nor friend. Everything reduces itself with me into subjects of observation, reflection, and analysis.

A look, a face, a sound, a joy, a sorrow, are immediately weighed, examined, verified, classified, noted down. And when I have said or written it, I am satisfied.

Saturday, August 2nd.—Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Five days. I have done my picture.

We began the same day with Claire, and the same subject, a canvas of four feet six inches by three feet six inches ; it's pretty large, you see. The Beaver, in Hugo's poem, a farm in the background, a young girl is sitting on the water's edge and speaking to a boy standing on the other side of the stream.

And suppose what I am doing is very good. It isn't possible, and for that matter there is something too commonplace in the expression of the faces, but I wanted to do it quickly. And it is so funny! You say to yourself: "Now, here's a bit that's turned out uncommonly well." . . . then again, "But this is good for nothing." And again, "In fact, it's very good, a really pretty picture." Claire has not finished her picture, she is going to finish it from mine.

I should like to sing the praises of the things I admire most.

I admire people who dare make remarks of their own. I admire people who see me painting and nudge my elbow for fun, without any bad or even malicious intention.

As for me, when I see Angélique sewing, I feel a kind of respect, and, in short, I should never dream of amusing myself in this way.

How dare they! . . . In short, it's incomprehensible. But what a lot of things there are that shock me, good heavens!

Nearly all true artists, all workers, feel like me.

I also admire people who eat good thick slices of mutton cutlets, consisting of fat and blood.

I admire the happy ones who eagerly swallow strawberries without troubling themselves about the little worms which one is nearly sure to find in them.

I examine each one, so that the pain is almost greater than the pleasure.

Again, I admire those who can eat all kinds of hashed and fricasseed things of which the ingredients are unknown.

I admire . . . . or I may say rather, I envy all simple, sane, and *everyday* natures. . . . . . but what would you?

Thursday, August 7th—Friday, August 8th—Saturday, August 9th.—The ladies have taken a little ice-making machine to Rue Legendre. He wished to have one to stand near his bed.

If only he doesn't think that things are lavished on him in order to get a picture out of him.

My picture is laid in. But I have no courage.

I have often to lie down and rest, and each time I get up my head turns round, and for some seconds everything swims before me. In short it has reached such a pass, that I have left my canvas about five o'clock to walk about the solitary avenues of the Bois.

Monday, August 11th.—I went out at five o'clock this morning to make a sketch, but there were already people about, and I had to go away furious.

In the afternoon I go again through the streets, nothing goes right any longer.

I go to the Bois.

Tuesday, August 12th.—In fact, my friend, the meaning of it all is that I am ill. I drag myself along and I struggle; but this morning I really thought I should have to capitulate—I mean go to bed and give up doing anything. Then all at once I got back some strength, and I went out again to try and find some things for my picture. My weakness and preoccupation isolate me from the real world; I never saw it with such lucidity, a lucidity beyond what I am usually capable of experiencing.

It appears now in all its details with a depressing clearness.

I, a foreigner, an ignorant girl, and too young as yet, pick and choose the badly turned phrases of the greatest writers and the silly inventions of the most celebrated poets. As for the newspapers, I can't read three lines without indignation. Not only because their French is like a cook's, but owing to the want of truth in the ideas. It's all conventional or done for pay.

No honesty, no sincerity, anywhere!

And then to hear *honourable men*, in order to conform to the spirit of party, tell lies or talk nonsense which they can't really believe!

Why, it is sickening.

After leaving Bastien we came home to dinner; he is still in bed, but looks calm and his eyes are clear. He has grey eyes, whose exquisite beauty is of course lost on the vulgar.

Do you understand me? Eyes that have seen Joan of Arc—we speak of that.

He complains of not having been understood better. And I tell him that he has been understood by everybody who is not a brute. And that his *Jeanne d'Arc* is a work of which we think things which it is impossible to tell him to his face.

Saturday, August 16*th.*—This is the first day on which I have actually set to work in a cab, and I was so cramped with cold, that on coming home I had to have a douche on my back, &c.

But how pleasant it is! The architect has placed my canvas this morning. His brother is better, and has been to the Bois. He was carried down-stairs and up-stairs in an easy-chair. Felix told us when he brought us the milk at four o'clock.

During the last week he has been taking goat's milk, of our goat; imagine the delight of the ladies. But that

is not all, for he has grown so intimate that he sends for some whenever he wants it. How charming!

But since he is better we shall lose him soon. The good time seems drawing to its close. We can't pay calls on a man who goes out.

Don't let me exaggerate, however.

He went to the Bois, but was carried in an easy-chair, and on coming in went to bed again.

That isn't really going out.

Tuesday, August 19th.—I am so knocked up that I hardly have strength to put on a cotton gown without any stays to go out and see Bastien. His mother receives us reproachfully. Three days! We have been three days without coming! Really dreadful! We are no sooner in the room than Emile exclaims:—"Is it all over? Have you no friendship left?"—"Well, well, have you given me up?" Says *he himself*:—"Ah, that isn't kind."

My coquetry would wish me to repeat here all his amiable reproaches and protestations that we can never, never, come too often.

Thursday, August 21st.—I loaf about all day, and only work in the cab from five to seven o'clock.

I have had a photograph taken of the corner I am painting so as to get the lines of the pavement quite correctly.

The undertaking took place at seven o'clock this morning. The architect came by six o'clock; then we all left together—Rosalie, the architect, Coco, the photographer, and myself.

Not that the presence of the brother is of any use, but it makes it more gay; I like having a little *état-major* about me.

Friday, August 22nd.—It is all over, he is doomed!

Baude, who has spent the evening here with the architect, tells mamma so.

Baude is his great friend; he wrote a long letter to him from Algiers which I have read.

Is it really all over?

Can it be?

But I have not yet been able to analyse the effect which this abominable news has produced on me.

This is a new sensation: to see a man who is condemned to death.

Tuesday, August 26th.—All the confusing thoughts which floated through my brain have now grouped themselves and settled on this black spot.

It is a new case within my experience, something unexpected, a man . . . . a young man, a great artist and . . . . you know what, in short . . . .

Condemned to death!

But that is becoming serious!

And every day, till it happens, I shall have to think of it! How terrible!

I am already inwardly prepared, with my head between my shoulders, awaiting the blow.

Has it not been the same all my life? When the blow is about to be struck, I await it with firmness.

Then I begin to reason, to rebel, and to be moved when it is all over.

I can't put two words together.

But don't think that I am unhappy, I am only profoundly absorbed, and ask myself what it will be.

Saturday, August 30th.—Most serious. I don't do anything. Since the Sèvres picture is finished I have done nothing—nothing except two wretched panels.

I sleep for hours in the daytime. True, I have done my little study in the cab, but you would laugh at it.

The canvas is placed on the easel; all is ready, it is only I who am missing.

If I were to tell everything! The horrible fears . . . .

And here's September, the bad weather is near.

The least chill I now take may force me to keep my bed for two months, and then there'll be the convalescence. . . .

And my picture!! I shall have sacrificed everything and . . . .

The moment has come to *believe* in God and to pray . . . .

Yes, it is the fear of being taken ill; in the state I am in, an attack of pleurisy may carry me off in six weeks.

This is the way I shall end, no doubt.

As I shall work at my picture all the same . . . . and as it will be cold. . . . And for that matter I may take cold in going for a walk as well as in painting; people who don't paint die just the same . . . . Enfin!

This, then, will be the end of all my miseries!

Such aspirations, such desires, such plans, such . . . and all to die at twenty-four years of age, on the threshold of everything.

I had foreseen it. As God was not able to give me all that was necessary to my life without being too partial, he will make me die. All these years—these many years so little—then nothing!

Wednesday, September 2nd.—I am making the drawing for the *Figaro*, with rests of an hour between, as I am dreadfully feverish. I can't go on. I have never been so ill; but as I don't say anything about it, I go out and I paint. Why mention it? I am ill, that's enough. Will talking about it do any good? But to go out

The illness is of a kind which allows it when you are feeling better.

Thursday, September 11th.—On Tuesday I began the study of a naked child; it may make a subject if it is good.

The architect came yesterday, and his brother wants to know why we have been missing so long. So we went to the Bois, late this evening; he was out for his usual turn; I took his seat; and you may imagine the surprise of all three at finding us there. He gives me his two hands, and in returning he gets into our carriage, while my aunt goes back with his mother. A good habit for that matter.

Saturday, September 13th.—We are friends, he loves us; he respects and takes an interest in me, he is fond of me. He told me yesterday that I did wrong to worry myself, that I ought to consider myself very lucky . . . . No other woman, he says, has had a success like mine and after so few years of study.

"In short, you are well known; people speak of Mlle. Bashkirtseff; all the world knows you. A genuine success! But there, you would like *two* Salons a year; get on faster, still faster!

"It is only natural, I own, one is ambitious; I have gone through it all." . . . . &c.

And to-day he said:

"People see me driving in the carriage with you; it is lucky that I am ill, or they would accuse me of having painted your picture."

"They have already said so," adds the architect.

"Not in the press!"

"Oh no!"

Wednesday, September 17th.—Few days pass that I am not

troubled by the remembrance of my father. I ought to have gone and taken care of him to the end. He said nothing, because he is like me, but he must have felt my absence cruelly. Why didn't I?

I think of it since Bastien-Lepage is here, and that we go so often to see him, spoiling him with all kinds of tender little attentions.

Isn't it very bad, really?

As far as mamma is concerned it is different, as she had been separated for several years, and only on good terms during the last five years; but I who was the daughter . . . !

Then God will punish me. But, dear me, once you go deeply into things, you owe nothing to your parents unless they have lavished every care upon you since you came into the world.

But that needn't prevent—but I haven't time to go into this question. Bastien-Lepage makes me feel remorse. This is God's punishment. But if I don't believe in God? I can't tell, and even then . . . . I have my conscience, and my conscience reproaches me for what I did.

And then it is impossible to say, I don't believe in God. That depends on what we understand by God. If the God we love and long for really existed, the world would be different.

There is no God who hears my evening prayer, and I pray every evening in spite of my reason.

Si le ciel est désert, nous n'offensons personne;
Si quelqu'un nous entend, qu'il nous prenne en pitié.

Yet how is it possible to believe?

Bastien-Lepage is very ill, we meet him in the Bois, his face convulsed with pain. . . . all the Charcots were there; this is done so that the doctor *himself* may be brought one day as if by accident. They have gone, and Bastien says that it's abominable of us to have abandoned him for two days.

d d 2

Thursday, September 18th.—I have seen Julian! I had missed him. But it is so long since we have seen each other, that we didn't seem to have much to say. He thinks I have a look of tranquillity, of having attained my aim. Art is everything; the rest is not worth while considering.

There is quite a family gathering round Bastien-Lepage; the mother and daughters, they remain to the end, but look like good, very gossiping women.

This monster of a Bastien wants to take care of me, he wants to cure me of my cough in a month; he buttons my jacket for me, and always worries about my being sufficiently wrapped up.

When Bastien had got into bed everybody sat down as usual on the left side of his bed; I went and sat down on the right-hand side; then turning his back on the others, he settled himself comfortably, and began very softly talking of art.

There's no doubt of it, he has a friendship for me, and even a selfish friendship. When I told him that beginning from to-morrow I meant to set to work, he answered:

"Oh, not yet! Don't let go of me." . . .

Friday, September 19th.—He is worse. . . . We didn't know what to do: to go or to remain with this man, crying out with pain, then smiling at us!

I am horrible. I speak of it without delicacy. It seems to me that I might find words that are more . . . I mean, less . . . . Poor child!

Wednesday, October 1st.—Such disgust and such sadness. What is the good of writing?

My aunt has left for Russia on Monday; she will arrive at one o'clock in the morning.

Bastien grows from bad to worse.

And I can't work.

My picture will not be done.

There, there, there!

He is sinking, and suffers terribly. When I am there I feel detached from the earth, he floats above us already; there are days when I, too, feel like that. You see people, they speak to you, you answer them, but you are no longer of the earth; it is a tranquil but painless indifference, a little like an opium-eater's dream. In a word, he is dying. I only go there from habit; it is his shadow, I also am half a shadow; what's the use?

He does not particularly feel my presence, I am useless; I have not the gift to rekindle his eyes. He is glad to see me. That's all.

Yes, he is dying, and I don't care; I don't realise it; it is something which is passing away. Besides, all is over.

All is over.

I shall be buried in 1885.

Thursday, October 9th.—You see, I do nothing. I have a fever all the time. My doctors are two precious idiots. I have sent for Potain, and again placed myself in his paws. He cured me once. He is kind, attentive, honest. It seems that my emaciation has nothing to do with my lungs; it is a thing I caught accidentally, and of which I didn't speak, always hoping that it would pass of itself, and preoccupied by my lungs, which are not worse than before.

I need not bore you with my illnesses. But the fact is, I can do nothing!!! Nothing!

Yesterday I had begun dressing to go to the Bois, and felt so weak that I was on the point of giving it up twice.

But I got there all the same.

Mme. Bastien-Lepage is at Damvillers since Monday, for the vintage, and although there are ladies with him he is glad to see us.

Sunday, October 12th.—I was not able to go out. I am quite ill although not laid up. The doctor comes every second day since Potain's visit, who sends me his sub-Potain.

O God! O God! My picture, my picture!

Julian has come to see me. So they have said that I am ill.

Alas, how hide it? And how can I go to Bastien-Lepage?

Thursday, October 16th.—I have a terrible amount of fever, which exhausts me. I spend all my time in the *salon,* changing from the easy-chair to the sofa.

Dina reads novels to me. Potain came yesterday, he will come again to-morrow. This man no longer needs money, and if he comes, it is because he takes some little interest in me.

I can no longer go out at all, but poor Bastien-Lepage comes to me; he is carried here, put in an easy-chair, and stretched out on cushions—I am in another chair drawn up close by, and so we sit until six o'clock.

I was dressed in a cloud of white lace and plush, all different shades of white; the eyes of Bastien-Lepage dilated with delight.

"Oh, if I could only paint!" said he.

And I—

Finis. And so ends the picture of this year!

Saturday, October 18th.—Bastien-Lepage comes nearly every day. His mother has returned, and they came all three!

Potain came yesterday, I am no better.

Sunday, October 19th.—Tony and Julian to dinner.

Monday, October 20th.—In spite of the magnificent

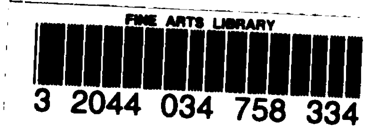
weather, Bastien-Lepage comes here instead of going to the Bois. He can scarcely walk any more; his brother supports him under each arm, almost carrying him. And once in his easy-chair the poor child is worn out. Ah, misery! And how many *concierges* enjoy good health! Emile is an exemplary brother. He carries Jules down-stairs on his shoulders, and up-stairs to the third storey. I meet with equal devotion from Dina. My bed has been in the drawing-room these last two days; but as the room is large, and divided by screens, couches, and a piano, you don't notice it. It is too difficult for me to go up-stairs.

. . . .

(Here the Journal ends.—Marie Bashkirtseff died eleven days later, on the 31st October, 1884.)

THE END

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